Save La Mesa groups: Polluting dam terrorism

By Beverly T. Mendrigal

POLLUTING THE WATER SUPPLY CONSTITUTES "genocide" and is an act of terrorism, environmental groups claim.

The groups, led by Sen. Manuel Villar Jr., said Manila Water Co. and its subcontractor, Ayala International Holdings Ltd., are jeopardizing Manila's water supply by constructing a dam in the La Mesa watershed.

They said the project would destroy the forest cover in the watershed area, which is the source of water for 3 million residents in Quezon City, Caloocan City, Valenzuela City, Malabon, Navotas and Manila.

Villar, Sen. Mar Roxas and Rep. Juan Miguel Zubiri filed a petition for the issuance of a writ of kalikasan to stop the construction of the dam.

The petition was filed before the Supreme Court on Wednesday.

Villar said the project would violate the Clean Water Act, the Philippine Environment Code and the Forestry Code.

Roxas said the project would violate the Water Crisis Act of 1995 and the Anti-Graft and Corrupt Practices Act.

Zubiri said the project would violate the Local Government Code.

Villar

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WEATHER FORECAST

TODAY: Mostly sunny with isolated rain showers and thunderstorms. Warm to hot. Light to moderate winds from the southwest to west. Slight to moderate seas.

Baguio	24°C / 31°C	Iloilo	26°C / 33°C
Tuguegarao	24°C / 34°C	Cebu	26°C / 33°C
Laoag	24°C / 34°C	Tacloban	26°C / 33°C
Dagupan	24°C / 34°C	Zamboanga	26°C / 33°C
Legazpi	24°C / 33°C	Cotabato	26°C / 33°C
Virac	24°C / 33°C	Davao	26°C / 33°C
Puerto Princesa	24°C / 33°C	Surigao	26°C / 33°C

Blue ribbon a dilemma for Villar

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

SENATE PRESIDENT Manuel Villar has barely warmed his seat, but already administration senators are threatening to oust him if the chair of the Blue Ribbon committee goes to the opposition.

Sen. Miriam Defensor-Santiago yesterday suggested that Villar leave the Blue Ribbon chair empty to allow administration Sen. Jinggoy Estrada to remain his pro tempore (acting) chairman.

"This is his (Villar's) problem. If he votes in favor of the opposition, administration senators will not cheer him and look for another president," said Santiago who was among nine administration senators who voted for Villar as senate president.

"We have a Villar majority but we do not have a majority so who should be chair of the Blue Ribbon committee. This is very strange because normally the majority of the Senate President is supported and homogeneous, they vote as a block on majority issue, but not in this particular issue," said Santiago.

SANTIAGO: 'This is Villar's problem'

Opposition coalition

Villar's fellow opposition senators—Alan Peter Cayetano, Pimentel and Juggy Escudero—claimed that they would let him re-establish that the Blue Ribbon chair with the opposition. The senate president recognizes pro-tempore Estrada.

"I know Senator Villar since 1994 and I know he doesn't compromise on his word. He promised us before the opposition broke up that if the Blue Ribbon will go to the opposition," said Cayetano who is being groomed for the post.

"Maliwanag (should not be afraid of an opposition) if they do not have any anomalies. It's not only important that in reality that Blue Ribbon chair is fair, the perception that he is fair is equally important or else (the Senate's) reputation will be damaged."

Santiago suggested that Villar settle all other chairmanship positions except for the Blue Ribbon so the Senate could start its work.

Carryover chair

Administration Sen. Juan Ponce Enrile said that under the rules, Villar is entitled to hold any position but he continued to insist that he was not interested in keeping the Blue Ribbon chair that he has held since 2001.

Opposition Sen. Panfilo Lacson, one of eight opposition senators who did not vote for Villar, also insisted on the opposition heading the Blue Ribbon committee. "I have no thing. If he (Anyone) holds the Blue Ribbon chair, then God's it. I've been hung are don't know," said Lacson.

Lacson said he would insist that the chairmanship of the survey committee should be decided in an open voting on the floor to know who among the opposition senators would vote for administration senators.

Villar was mum on who he would nominate for the Blue Ribbon chair. He said he would make an announcement of the full committee membership positions next week.

Senate passes Trillanes 'reso'

By Dona Z. Pazolagan

AGAINST THE OBJECTIONS of four senators, the Senate yesterday passed a resolution in favor of allowing detained senator-elect Antonio Trillanes IV to attend Senate sessions.

The resolution, introduced by Senate Minority Leader Aquilino Pimentel Jr., was adopted by a 17-4 vote.

Senators Juan Ponce Enrile, John Henry Sotto, Miriam Defensor-Santiago and Richard Gordon opposed the resolution, citing Trillanes' case before the judiciary.

The four senators, however, said they sympathized with Trillanes.

Nominal voting

Trillanes is presently detained at the Marine headquarters in Fort Bonifacio while on trial on the Makati Regional Trial Court for coup d'etat charges for his alleged involvement in the July 2003 Oakwood mutiny. He also is campaigning general senator-elect.

Enrile earlier told Senate members he would open the resolution only to a general or quadrill to the eight members' consent. But Pimentel disagreed.

At Drilon's insistence, a nominal voting was held that required each senator to state his vote.

Sen. Lito Lapid was not in the session hall during the voting but had earlier signed a sign the resolution as co-author.

Enrile, Sen. Jose Miguel Zubiri, who was reportedly called by Malacañang a "shoo" for his controversial relinquishment, voted in favor of the resolution.

In their dissenting opinion, the four senators said they "cannot in all fairness" support the resolution since the Supreme Court has already ruled against giving special privileges to detained lawmakers.

In 2000, the high court denied the request of former Zamboanga del Norte Rep. Romeo Jalosjos, a convicted child rapist, to attend sessions of the House of Representatives.

Santiago cited three constitutional violations. She said the resolution violates the constitutional doctrine on separation of powers, violates the constitutional doctrine on the independence of the judiciary and violates the equal protection clause of the Constitution.

No interference

Aside from Pimentel, Drilon in favor of the resolution were Senators Edgardo Angara, Alan Peter Cayetano, Pia Cayetano and Ma Nancy Recto.

But Pimentel insisted that the resolution does not constitute interference in the functions of the courts.

He said the resolution was just an expression of the "sense of the Senate that all concerned in the Senators Trillanes vs. Honorable Judge" are instructed to expedite the proceedings.

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Palace to Villar: GMA's in control

By Michael Lim Ubac

MALACAÑANG WATCHERS MAINTAINED THAT President Macapagal-Arroyo was "firmly in control" of the country and of the presidency, apparently in response to a remark from Senate President Manuel Villar that Mrs. Arroyo would be in a "lame duck" for the remainder of her term.

"The President will be the President. She said, 'a President is always as strong as she wants to be. Take it for what it's worth. The President is the President of the Philippines. She will remain President," said Malacañang Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita.

Asked how powerful Mr. Arroyo would be in the next three years, Ermita said "let's not label a person."

"She'll just do what she thinks is supposed to be. She's firmly in control of the situation," he said.

The President's political adviser, Gabriel Claudio, said any talk about Mr. Arroyo being a lame duck leader was "counter-productive."

He said lawmakers should instead focus on passing legislation that would benefit the people.

"Senator President Villar should be calling Ladies, not lame-duck," Claudio said in a text message.

The President intends to convene soon the Legislative-Executive Development Advisory Council to discuss her priority bills such as proposed amendments.

"Ladies a definitely a good mechanism for

What, no woman deputy speaker?

A PARTY-LIST REPRESENTATIVE YESTERDAY lamented that Debate will be completely remiss today to elect a deputy speaker from the ranks of female lawmakers despite the unprecedented number of women in the House of Representatives in the 14th Congress.

"I feel frustrated that despite the increase in the number of lady legislators in the House of Representatives, no woman deputy speaker was appointed by the majority," said Akbayan Rep. Risa Hontiveros-Baraquel, a women's rights advocate, in a statement.

Hontiveros-Baraquel earlier filed a bill—House Bill 1960 or the Gender Balance Bill—that would seek to increase 30 percent representation for women in appointive and elective positions in government.

Four-fifths of the 238 lawmakers who voted to elect Speaker Jose de Venecia on July 23 were men.

Hontiveros-Baraquel said the lack of women in the House's top leadership "is a clear indication that the long-standing practice of discrimination against women in politics and governance still persists."

She said the measure she filed would provide additional support services for women in politics and government.

Germelina Bautista

Holiday economics now a law

HOLIDAY ECONOMICS, OR THE PRACTICE of shifting holiday observances, is now official government policy after President Macapagal-Arroyo signed Republic Act 9492 into law.

The law, "an act rationalizing the celebration of holidays," mandates that most holidays, except those with religious significance, will be shifted to the nearest Monday, said Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita who announced the new law yesterday.

Then, next month, Ninoy Aquino Day, which celebrates the martyred anti-Marcos opposition leader, nominally celebrated on Aug. 21, a Tuesday, will shift to the preceding Monday, Aug. 20.

National Heroes' Day, celebrated on Aug. 31, will be observed every last Monday of August, which this year falls on Aug. 27.

"Therefore, we have two long weekends for the month of August," said Ermita.

The "surrender days" are Bataan Day (April 9), Labor Day (1 May), Independence Day (June 12), National Heroes Day (Aug. 31), Bonifacio Day (Nov. 30) and Rizal Day (Dec. 30).

Thus, if Independence Day, June 12, falls on a weekend, it will be celebrated on the following Monday. The same principle applies if June 12 falls on any day except Monday.

Exceptions

Exempted from holiday economics—that is, holidays that will be observed on the date on which they fall—are Christmas Day (Dec. 25), New Year's Day (Dec. 31), New Year's Day (Jan. 1), Holy Thursday, Good Friday, Easter Sunday, Eid'l Fitre (Oct. 13) and All Saints Day (Nov. 1).

"Good Friday, you cannot move it to Saturday. Christmas Day, Dec. 25, how can you change the birthday of Jesus Christ? Christmas is Christmas," said Ermita.

The President also assured the news holiday economics, introduced the policy in 2003 to reduce disruption to business and production schedules, encourage domestic tourism and give employees long weekends.

Critics questioned the soundness of the policy, saying it would result in lesser output and affect economic productivity. Others deplored it as presidential indowing with baneey ala eve, ecoview for.

But National Statistical Coordination Board figures showed that if tourism businesses and related industries leveraged by 18 percent as a result of the long weekends, the economy would actually experience a 3.5-percent growth to grow domestic product.

Under the country's labor laws, employees must pay 200 percent of the daily rate to those employees who report for work on legal holidays—Labor, 1 April 9, May 1, Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, June 12, National Heroes Day, Eid'l Fitre, Nov. 30, Christmas Day and Dec. 30.

On special holidays, employees must pay 30 percent more (Secretary Ermita's note: There are Ninoy Aquino Day, May 1, election day, Nov. 30, Black Saturday and holidays that may be declared from time to time by the President.

Michael Lim Ubac

ASIAN SECURITY
Special action forces of the Philippine National Police arrive at the Senate barracks to prepare for the security arrangements of the 40th Asean ministerial meetings to be hosted by the country on July 27 to Aug. 2 at the Philippine International Convention Center.

Garcia, allies form House 'middle force'

By Christian V. Esguerra

CEBU REP. PABLO GARCIA, THE DEfeated candidate for the House speakership, and his allies have formed themselves into a 30-member so-called reform bloc to serve as a check on Speaker Jose de Venecia.

Camarines Sur Rep. Luis Villafuerte, Garcia's campaign manager in his run for the post, said the new group would serve as a "middle force."

"Whether the new reform bloc will make things difficult for De Venecia will depend on his attitude, work ethic, and sincerity," Villafuerte said.

Garcia's loss to De Venecia has threatened to further divide the ruling coalition in the lower chamber. De Venecia is president of the Lakas-Christian Muslim Democrats while Garcia belongs to President Macapagal-Arroyo's party, the Kabalikat ng Malayang Pilipino (Kampi).

Villafuerte, the Kampi president, made it clear that the Garcia bloc was not bolting the administration and going over to the opposition.

"There are many things we can agree upon—even if there are also many things that divide us. Let us concentrate on the things we can agree on," he said.

De Venecia himself has reached out to his 82-year-old rival, promising to give the latter an "effective and meaningful place" in the chamber.

"He will always show because he is a diamond. Nobody can smother and ignore him," he said.

But Garcia was not in the mood to be cooped. Yesterday, two days after losing the election for the House leadership, he delivered a privilege speech attacking the manner in which De Venecia was swept to a fifth term.

"In this House last Monday, we observed a spectacle—an unprecedented travesty (of) democracy, a supreme desecration of the code of law, so bizarre, so unusual, so outrageous," he said.

Garcia also alleged that he had been asked by Gabriel Claudio, the president's trail adviser on political affairs, to withdraw his candidacy.

He said nobody, not Claudio or anybody else, had asked him to withdraw.

"We were simply not given the chance to participate in the race," he said.

But Garcia said he was "accepting what happened," while maintaining that he and his new "reform bloc" would continue to work for the reform of the chamber.

"The plain and painful truth is this House, the house of democracy, is a damaged institution," he said.

Villafuerte said a caucus of the Garcia bloc last Tuesday brought together at least 30 lawmakers, including Representatives Danilo Suarez and Paul Daza (Liberal Party), Jose Solis (Kampi), Antonio Cerilles (Nacionalista Peoples Coalition), and Rodgon Gilangalen (Partido ng Manang Pilipino).

Villafuerte said other supporters of the new bloc to swell to 40 during the second caucus scheduled for next Monday.

Administration Rep. Prospero Pichay, the new head of the House committee on appropriations, is a member of the group of Garcia, led reform bloc.

"I just hope that as members of the party founded by no less than President Arroyo, they would continue supporting her administration's legislative agenda," Magsaysay said in a statement.

"We should not break apart nor because of the House election. It's over and it's time that we may together once again and work as partners in achieving the objectives envisioned by the President in her State of the Nation Address," he said.

Tobacco firms warned against promoting smoking by kids

By Leila B. Salaverria

THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH IS tightening a campaign against cigarette smoking, warning that the tobacco industry is setting its sights on children to replace a dwindling breed of old smokers.

Health Secretary Francisco Duque III told a news conference yesterday that there was a need to regulate tobacco ads so that has children would be enticed to take up the habit that he described as a "pacifying threat against public health."

"Statistic evidence already provides a strong link between tobacco advertisement and the spread of smoking. Dirtiest cigarette ads can pollute the young minds of children who are exposed to the misleading positive image of smoking shown in these advertisements," Duque said.

"We cannot afford to add children in statistics. The DOH is committed to preserving these children from being seduced by outdoor advertisements of cigarettes in neighborhood stores," he said.

A ban on billboard advertising took effect on July 1, but tobacco manufacturers are questioning the law that has outlawed the health department to pull down all outdoor advertising of cigarettes.

"While a new cigarette cigarettes is sweeping entire countries to create a tobacco-free world, we cannot be the last nation standing without the political will to take the necessary steps against tobacco advertisements," Duque said.

Dr. Dan Cruz, vice chairman, Philippine Institute of the Philippine Pediatric Society said children were being targeted by the cigarette companies because they will be the customers in the future.

"If there are no children, they will become extinct," Santos said.

The Tobacco Control Act was passed in 2003 but the government chose its effective it only two years later. Millions apart from AFP

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Joe de V proposes ceasefire, amnesty for Reds

By Christian V. Esguerra

SPEAKER JOSE DE VENECIA (2D) Tuesday proposed a "wide-ranging" amnesty program to encourage communist insurgents to return to the negotiating table with the Arroyo administration.

De Venecia was convinced that the strategy recommended by a nationalist ensemble, wise enough to revive the stalled peace talks with the communist-led National Democratic Front.

"We should consider a wide-ranging amnesty program that will solve the [insurgency's] problem, that would trigger the revival of the peace talks," he told the Inquirer in a phone interview.

To jumpstart the program, he said he would file an amnesty resolution in Congress after a series of consultations with leaders from the political left and Right. "We will try to know what's reasonable to them."

Peace negotiations aimed at ending more than three decades of bloody insurgency—the longest in Asia—stalled three years ago, partly because of the CPP's inclusion on the list of terrorist organizations by the United States and the European Union.

Also on the list was the New People's Army, armed wing of the Communist Party of the Philippines.

The issue has since remained contentious with the government refusing to give in to the NDF peace panel's condition that the names be sufficiently addressed first before talks resumed.

It forms part of the "prejudicial questions" raised by the NDF, which urged the Arroyo administration to at least issue a categorical statement that it was not supporting the CPP/NPA's inclusion on the terrorist list.

It apparently didn't help that Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita and Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez earlier announced that the government would ask the courts to declare as terrorists the CPP/NPA, along with the Abu Sayyaf bandit group.

The declaration was to be sought under the terms of the antiterrorist Human Security Act.

Luis Jalandoni, head of the NDF peace panel, and CPP founder Jose Maria Sison had refused to return to the negotiating table under the terms previously proposed by the government, sources here.

They insisted that the government first address the prejudicial questions, which also included the indemnifications of victims of human rights abuses during the Marcos regime.

Another major roadblock is the resumption of peace talks was the government's failure to curb the spate of extrajudicial killings, most of which had victimized militant activists.

Corrections

CORRECT PHOTO

WRONG PHOTO

IN THE JULY 25 ISSUE, an Inquirer Northern Luzon article on Page A19—"Quarry challenge slaps us" ran/ted the wrong photograph. The caption, "These worries, when lahed, will lead to the shutting of quarry revenues for Pampanga," should have been used with the opposite photo....not with the photo above.

* * *

IN THE SAME ISSUE, an item in the Nation article on Page A10—"1.2-yr-old killed in Army offensive gathered cops, abaca for parents"...misstated the location of Hilaba town. Hilaba is in Leyte province—not Southern Leyte.

* * *

Readers may send their requests for corrections of factual errors appearing in the Day Desk, Philippine Daily Inquirer, PSI Building, Chino Roces Avenue cor Rizal Extension Street, Makati City, fax (63-2) 897-8703, e-mail address: inquirer@inquirer.com.ph.

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BEHEADINGS WHODUNIT

Basilan puzzle deepens

By Julie S. Alipala, Inquirer Mindanao

ZAMBOANGA CITY—IT SHOULD LIKE A rogues' gallery. The military points to Abu Sayyaf leaders, the insurgents point to politicians, and the public has gone to each other.

One politician just laughed it off, saying his accusers must be out of their minds.

None of those who made the allegations accusing cohorts of involvement presented any evidence to back their claims.

Who was behind the July 10 beheading of 10 Marines in Basilan? Local officials and rebel leaders still could be guessing.

But Sultan Ali, a Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) member of the Basilan ceasefire monitoring team, said the government should first check who were the real culprits "before pointing an accusing finger at us."

"They might unearth the real story behind the attack. Someone is playing a game and we are just all pawns in this game," Ali said.

Mayor Jakila Kurani of Albuera said the incident was "political in nature" and had nothing to do with the kidnapping of Indian priest Giancarlo Bossi. The missionary was freed last week after 15 days' captivity.

The military has said the Marines were looking for Bossi when they were ambushed by the MILF, which denied involvement.

Kurani's claim

Kurani claimed a certain politician, who lost in the last mayoral race, fed the Marines wrong information and led to the ambush.

"Ang mga sinasabing kasabwat ay kumpanda ng Abu Sayyaf ang may gusto nito! The Abu Sayyaf were responsible for this!," the mayor told the Inquirer.

Kurani and Abu Sayyaf leader Aka Pumji Indama, with at least 40 followers, maintain a camp in a barangay 7 km from the ambush site.

In Kurani's version, Indama is a cousin of Jun Dimarosa Indama, who unsuccessfully ran for governor last May.

Sullman blames Kurani's race

Sullman dismissed the allegation and countered that people close to Kurani, purportedly including a cousin, were the ones involved.

MARINES carry their dead after the Basilan debacle.

"The authorities should probe deeper into this," Sullman said.

Sullman's younger brother, Mujib Hatimam, said the MILF men exposed killed during the ambush were not really MILF but "were all tenants and followers of Kurani."

Kurani said another Abu Sayyaf leader Nasser in an area near the ambush site was a nephew of former Tribune Omar Ugarsa Jamiri.

Marines and Akbar

No immediate comment could be obtained from Jamiri but the police earlier said it was Jamiri who helped the government win the release of Bossi from his kidnappers.

Ali, for his part, claimed MILF commander Mussur Ibrahim supported that Basilan Rep. Wahab Akbar had something to do with the Marines' presence in Datamin, the ambush site.

Ali said the MILF believed Akbar and the Marines were in cahoots to attack the MILF camp in Datamin in the guise of searching for Bossi.

"If he had nothing to do with the entry of the Marines in the MILF territory, how come the Marines were using the dump truck of the Isabela mayor?" Ali said, talking in Filipino.

The mayor of Isabela is Cherry Akbar, the lawmaker's third wife.

'Why me?'

Ali also accused Akbar of issuing firearms to Kurani.

Ermita admitted he received several high-powered guns, including an M203, from Akbar for "in case necessity arises" for local police duties.

Akbar, in a phone interview, laughed off the allegations.

"Why pick on me? Why blame me and my office?" Akbar said. "We are leaders of Basilan. Plus in his right mind would like that our own province be stained by conflicts and wars? What will I achieve? Why corrupt-calibrating from me?"

Akbar said his wife, Cherry, had allowed the Marines to use two dump trucks.

Poor intelligence

"If those attackers are my people, they will make sure to spare the properties of Isabela City, but to steal the vehicles and burn the trucks," Akbar said.

The AFP has named MILF commander Pahid Orkon as one of those behind the beheading of the Marines. Ali said this was "impossible."

Former Basilan Rep. Gerry Salapuddin said the ambush could have been avoided if the military had good intelligence.

In a text message to the Inquirer, Salapuddin said what happened was "a clear case of poor intelligence and misinformation necessitating to moving divisions."

"The possible involvement of private armed groups ... must be investigated and dealt with decisively no matter who are involved, if only the ceasefire guidelines were respected and coordination with the MILF in the area, this incident would have not happened," he added.

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THE DAILY GOSPEL

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Joachim and Ann

1st Reading: Sir 44:1, 10-15
Gospel: Matthew 13:16-17

Jesus said to his disciples, "Blessed are your eyes because they see, and your ears, because they hear.

"For I tell you that many prophets and upright people would have longed to see the things you see, but they did not, and to hear the things you hear but they did not hear it."

Commentary:

There are relatively few mentions of Mary, the virgin mother of Jesus. The first was in Nazareth, along with their relatives, to greet Jesus's parents, Joachim and Anne. Mr. Anthony Apuya, Jr. The readings reflect this. Mr. Apuya praises those who have passed on to their descendants their faith, their virtues, and God's constancy and claim. Honoring parents and relatives who have died before us is faith, and telling these stories, passing on their wisdom, keeps the relationship alive and growing through generations.

We are blessed by Jesus in the gospel, reminding us that our ancestors in faith, are not just or even primarily our families, but the prophets and holy men and women who went before us who longed to see what we see and wanted so much to hear the Word of God in Jesus but were not able to. What are we passing on to the generations that come after us, not only our own families, but the people who walked so much long to see the Word of God in our lives taking flesh so that they might belong to the family of Jesus?

Scripture Reflections by: Fr Ernesto D. Tiñio, Opm, Editorial Consultant: Fr. Jeff Befo, Opm, Editorial Staff: Jessica Zafra, Ma. Alicia Austria-Martinez, Ma. Victoria Africa, Jeremiah Cruz, Ma. Cristina Pastor, Ma. Lourdes Montinola

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Asean execs shrug off Rice no-show

By Tarra Quismundo

ORGANIZERS OF THE ASSOCIATION OF Southeast Asian Nations are taking no offense for the decision of US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice to skip the Asean meetings in Manila and proceed instead to the Middle East.

Ambassador Mariano Rojeor Jr., head of the Philippine organizing committee, said yesterday that Asean fully understood the US decision to replace its head of delegation with Deputy Secretary of State John Negroponte, who was Ambassador to Manila from 1993 to 1996.

"I don't think that sends any kind of message to the Asean. The fact that the sites were settled all the other meetings that were already prepared for because she was expected to come here is an indication that she was not dressing us save other countries," said Rojeor, secretary general of the 40th Asean Ministerial Meeting National Organizing Committee (MOC).

Inquiring any wording sources has the propagandist to discount the head of delegation. Rojeor believed "it is not the interest of the US to delegated the Asean," as proved by its record of support for the organization's objectives.

"Meetings such as this are not used to convey messages of distrust or a wasting of relations," Rojeor told reporters.

Rice was among the delegation heads of 17 Asean dialogue partners, including the European Union, Russia, China, Japan, Australia and Canada, expected to join meetings of the 10-nation Asean opening formally on Monday.

Rojeor and Rice was confirmed to be arriving "until one a half weeks ago," when the US State Department gave notice that Negroponte was taking her place. Negroponte is expected to arrive on Monday.

Rice is scheduled to travel to Egypt and Saudi Arabia from July 30 to Aug. 2. She takes three of the Manila meetings.

US State Department spokesperson Sean McCormack said in Washington that while Rice "very much looks forward" to visiting the Philippines, "unfortunately at this time it just cannot [possible]."

Rojeor said Negroponte "will be a man of both in head of delegation of the US" as he believed the former US envoy to Manila understood the Philippine situation from strong State Department officials.

In a statement, the US Embassy said Negroponte will hold bilateral talks with Philippine officials prior to scheduled meetings of the Asean Regional Forum, a 27-nation cooperation expected to discuss peace and security in the region.

6,500-strong security force

More than 6,500 police and military personnel have been drafted into 4 units to dole guns-bugle to arrive, and Deputy Director Arthur Simon of the Philippine National Police.

A security cordon has been thrown around the main venue, the Philippine International Convention Center in Manila bay, with all streets blocked to unauthorized traffic.

Bomb dogs have been brought in to check cases for weapons and explosives.

Police also have begun rounding up beggars, vagrants and drug addicts from the streets of the capital to get them out of sight of Asean officials.

"We just want to make sure that there are no ailing roads that these delegates will be passing through," said police spokesperson Senior Insp. Reinan Gonzales.

Concern over Basilan

She said the drive to get beggars, street children and drug addicts off Manila's streets was standard operating procedure and that police have intensified the operation as part of a campaign to spruce up the capital for the foreign guests.

THE STATE OF THE US STATE DEPARTMENT: In this file photo, US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice escorts the then newly appointed US Ambassador to Iraq John Negroponte at the White House for Rice welcoming 36 countries awarded for running out corruption, supporting human rights and adhering to the rule of law. AP/FILE

"We are monitoring the situation in Mindanao and Basilan and [we] are very vigilant on the streets of Manila," Reese told a news briefing.

Almost 6,000 people have fled their homes on the southern island of Basilan to avoid a heated clash between Muslim rebels and soldiers hunting for the killers of 14 Marines, 10 of whom were beheaded.

Despite reports that police recently broke an Abu Sayyaf sleeper cell in Manila, diplomatic sources have expressed "some concern" that should there be a major offensive in Basilan during the Asean meetings, which begin on Saturday and end on Aug. 3, there could be a backlash in Manila.

The massed body of government troops in Cebu last December was thrown into chaos when a number of foreign embassies issued travel alerts warning of a "possible" terrorist threat.

The summit of the 10-nation bloc was eventually canceled due to the approach of a typhoon. The meeting was resumed in January with most heads of government attending.

With reports from AFP and AP

Report of US aid cut triggers uproar

From page A1

for the Philippine military and police forces' following allegations they were involved in extrajudicial killings."

The army was cleared on what it said was a US state department report.

The network quoted the Embassy denial here.

The Inter Deputy Alysmeng Makalintan jumped on the ABS-CBN report, saying it welcomed the US action.

"The US military aid is being saved by the Philippine military and police forces in killing activists and committing other human rights abuses," a Bayan statement said.

No budget yet

US Embassy spokesperson Matthew Lussenhop said the story got ahead of the US appropriations process.

"I think it's misleading to say that assistance has been cut," Lussenhop told the inquirer by phone. "The US federal government's budget for fiscal year 2008 hasn't been passed yet ... It would be premature to say that aid has been cut."

In the proposed $30 budget for foreign operations, passed in the US state department website (https://www.state.gov), the department requested a total 2008 funding of $84.7 million.

This is $24.6 million less than the actual total assistance given to the Philippines in 2006 or $15.1.2 million.

Among the big decreases sought are for foreign military financing and international military education.

There are, however, proposed increases, such as for economic support fund from $24.7 million to $36 million). Also sought is to be increased are funding for infrastructure, private sector competitiveness and human rights.

Obstacles to progress

The state department report says the major obstacles to Philippine progress are weak institutions of government, as well as corruption and security and terrorism threats. It stresses the need for the Philippines to address "the underlying conditions that threaten security."

There was no mention of political killings in the state department report.

Asked whether there was a proposal to cut military assistance, Sen said he was not privy to the status of the US foreign aid appropriations as the government budget was still being deliberated by Congress.

He added there were many agencies involved in the "nationwide complicated" budget process.

"The main thing for us is, it's not about the numbers but the quality of the programs and how effective they are," Lussenhop said. He said that figures should not be used "as a shorthand on the quality of relations" between the US and the Philippines.

Cuts all around

Most specifically, the state department's per-country proposed list foreign military aid as posted on its website, showed a cut in figures for the Philippines, from actual appropriations in 2006 of around $50 million to $37.8 million in 2007 and $33.1 million in 2008.

The latest number earned the heading "proposed."

Proposed 2008 appropriations for countries across Africa, Asia and the Pacific and the Middle East also showed a general downturn.

The US Senate, in a report, recommended a $30 million appropriation for foreign military financing for the Philippines, or more than double the state department's recommendation.

A US House committee report sees silent on the amount of military aid for the Philippines but took note of extrajudicial killings in the country.

Killings

The House report read in part:

"The committee is highly concerned with reports of extrajudicial killings by the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) and the Philippine National Police (PNP), noting reports of more than 800 extrajudicial killings since 2001. The committee is deeply concerned with the effect these killings may be having on the work of civil society organizations."

The House committee directed the state department to check on "the status of investigations into extrajudicial killings and gross violations of human rights by the AFP and PNP."

Both hearings were slated on July 25.

Earlier, in the Palace press briefing and before receiving the clarification from the DFA, Ermita's aides reportedly asked for a statement from the ABS-CBN report.

Propaganda war

Ermita had expressed surprise, saying he had no "specific knowledge" about it.

As said he recently spoke with US Ambassador Ricardo Zaynay but "this matter never figured in our conversation. He never mentioned anything about it."

If the aid reduction were true, Ermita had warned, it would affect the attitudes of Filipinos and Americans alike and grave that the Left was winning the propaganda war.

"That is a big thing. That would have a big impact," Ermita said, before the official statement.

Ermita noted that the Left and other "front organizations" had been lobbying with the United States for aid cuts "because of the more or more political killings and human rights violations."

PNP surprised

The PNP also expressed surprise at the reported aid cut.

Chief Director Directorate for Investigation and Detective Management chief, Director Geary Barias, said he had been in constant contact with his US counterparts and that there were no hints of any reduction of aid to the PNP.

Recently, US Embassy officials met with top PNP officials to find ways to solve extrajudicial killings. PNP officials gave the US a catalogue of cooperation and material aid that the US government could consider. With a report from Jacinth Pepito

Republic of the Philippines
Supreme Court
Manila
SOCIETY FOR JUDICIAL EXCELLENCE

THE FOLLOWING ARE THE FINALISTS FOR THE
2007 SEARCH FOR OUTSTANDING JUDGES AND CLERKS OF COURT:

A. Outstanding Second Level Court Judges
1. Arantaga, Juliana C.
2. Barrios, Manuel M.
3. Carmeja, Ma. Cristina J.
4. Castillo, Cordial U.
5. De Guzman, Elsa L.
6. Dumahan, Jr., Simeon P.
7. Fuentes, Roger B.
8. Ramos, Lennee G.
9. Valentino, Esperanza F.

B. Outstanding First Level Court Judges
1. Burgos-Villavert, Cecilyn E.
2. Dimaantoroado, Ma. Loma P.
3. Gutierrez, Romualdo F.
4. Hidalgo-Rueta, Liselotte S.
5. Ibay, Agustin J.
6. Mangrobang, Ma. Cristeleta C.
7. Rabaya-Tria, Ibrahim M.
8. Tamayo, Josefito P.
9. Tiston, Elliot B.
10 Simon, Ester M.

C. Outstanding Clerks of Court
1. Bonifilo, Julie Rita S.
2. Hate, Zandro T.
3. Damasing, Marlobe M.
4. De la Rosa-Buffon, Teodora
5. Echem, Chiclo V.
6. Jimenez-Bonifacio, C.
7. Largo, Shelle Madonna A.
8. Lesterio, Anna Mae D.
9. Makarian, Marcial Umbrad T.
10 Matias, Mauro B.

The public may submit any comments on the above-mentioned finalists on or before 30 JULY 2007, to the:

The Permanent Secretariat
Society for Judicial Excellence
2nd Floor (formerly OCC, Third Division)
Annex Building, Supreme Court
Padre Faura, Manila
Email Add.:
judicialexcellence.sec@gmail.com
Telefax. No.: 521-1381

18 July 2007

MA. LUISA L. LAUREA
Executive Director

Asean charter: Yes to human rights ...

From page A1

several, including a bedrock rule of noninterference in each other's domestic affairs.

"All sum Asean has a more rules-based organization," Cruz said.

A treaty issue has been stalemating the promotion of human rights in a region where some countries' rights records have been spotty at best.

Burma (Myanmar), for example, has been condemned by Western governments and criticized even by fellow Asean members for ignoring calls to free political detainees, led by Nobel Peace Prize Aung San Suu Kyi, and not implementing a promised roadmap to democracy.

The draft charter calls for the "respect of fundamental freedoms, the promotion and protection of human rights and the promotion of social justice."

Human rights commission

A Southeast Asian diplomat, speaking on condition of anonymity because he was not authorized to speak to media, said a high-level task force drafting the charter had not yet decided whether to include a commission provision urging the establishment of a human rights commission.

Some Asean members fear such a commission could allow scrutiny of rights conditions in one country possibly violating the group's noninterference policy.

Rosario Manalo, who heads the task force writing the charter, has said a commission would allow Asean to deal with its human rights problems in its own way and jury Western criticism of problems in the region.

Ban on nuclear weapons

The charter calls for the nonuse and elimination of a 10-year old treaty banning nuclear weapons in Southeast Asia and prohibits "all other weapons of mass destruction and interference by external powers."

It recommends aggression and threats of force. Members would be prohibited from banking any policy or activity that would threaten or a country's sovereignty and political and economic stability.

Agreements would reject unconstitutional changes of governments that could trigger diplomatic action.

Rojeor said he was not privy to the status of the US foreign aid appropriations as the government budget was still being deliberated by Congress.

He added there were many agencies involved in the "nationwide complicated" budget process.

"The main thing for us is, it's not about the numbers but the quality of the programs and how effective they are," Lussenhop said. He said that figures should not be used "as a shorthand on the quality of relations" between the US and the Philippines.

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Hungarians losing sleep over siesta

From page A1

introduction of the siesta?" the proposal question reads.

In giving its initial approval, the charges committee said the proposed question was sufficient in form and content.

Hungarians suffering from the recent heat wave this month, however, still have to keep paying its chief administrative as the committee outlines steps down a referendum proposal about making next June its national holiday, saying it would have discussed the matter.

200,000 signatures needed

As for the proponents of the bill, on an electronic sig, they must raise 200,000 signatures to make the proposed referendum a reality. A vote could be held on the issue in early 2008.

Some health experts have touted the benefits of a daily nap as a calorie reliever. The cultural importance of the daily siesta, however, has come under attack in Spain and Mexico, with critics arguing that the midday work stoppage puts businesses at a competitive disadvantage in today's global economy.

While it is relatively easy to organize a referendum in Hungary since democracy came to the Central European country in 1989, only two issues have won the approval of voters.

Parties' views on the issues concerning Hungary's membership in the European Union and in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. (Source: Reports from AFP and Reuters)

'FOCUS ON REAL ECONOMY'

No new taxes, senators warn

By Ed Cabuenas

SENATORS TESTERDAY PANNED President Macapagal-Arroyo not to impose new taxes and sell state assets as a bargain in the face of a worsening fiscal position that has made the country's credit watchers ill at ease.

Sen. Mar Roxas III, concerned that the President would be desperate to take short-term measures to assuage international credit rating agencies like Fitch Ratings that have raised a red flag against the Administration's failure to meet its fiscal deficit targets due to lower-than-expected collections, "focus on the real economy and not just the financial markets," said Roxas who also warned that new taxes would unduly burden the masses while cheering on financial experts.

Fitch reported that due to the "sleep-pointing" first half tax collection, it expects the budget deficit to hit P125 billion or 1.9 percent of the gross domestic product or nearly double the target of P65 billion this year.

"[He should first implement the attrition law [which penalizes revenues officers that fail to meet their target collections] before availing new taxes or embarking on a borrowing binge or selling off assets to fill up the widening gap between spending and revenues. What use is the law if she does not put it to use?" said Roxas in an interview.

Roxas called on the President to share her fiscal plans with the public, specifically the sale of government assets that Finance Secretary Margarito Teves has tagged as his primary stopgap move to cover for the imminent shortfall in revenues.

"We cannot tell the government assets just like in ukay-ukay to make up for the shortcomings of the EIB and BOC. Selling assets is a one-off deal. Once done, you're left with the perpetual problem of collecting proper taxes which can only be solved by better tax administration," said Roxas who asked the administration to account for the taxes collected from the expanded value-added tax reforms two years.

In a statement, Sen. Francisco Tatad said the President should not use the Fitch outlook as a "jump-off point" to impose new taxes. "She has not even dealt with the basic issues concerning lack of jobs, spiraling prices and low income. She does not have ascendancy to add or even raise taxes," said Tatad who suggested that the government focus on more tax efficient collection and administration.

Tatad also said the poor Fitch outlook on the Philippines was a clear indication that "revenue agencies refuse to do her bidding and collect existing taxes non-exemption."

"The President is clearly but rarely feeling that she is no longer on top of everything. She had to take the Senate Blues of the Nation Address occasion to remind her allies that she is still the President," said Tatad.

Penalize absentees in House, neophyte proposes

By Jillson W. Lopez

NO WORK, NO PAY

An opposition congressman yesterday proposed that penalties be imposed on legislators who are habitually absent from congressional sessions.

"We have to do this. The train setting of Congress is 20 percent. We have been paid with taxpayers' money to attend sessions and yet there are problems of quorum," said Lagman de Oro (2nd) Rep. Rufus Rodriguez at the National Press Club forum in Manila.

Rodriguez said absent members would lose deductions from their P18,000 monthly salaries for their absences if the issue will be supported by the committee on rules.

"It's an uphill climb, no pay, I mean [late] leaders before. Whenever are votes are drawn, they deducted it from our salary. Unless of course, if the excuse is valid," said Rodriguez, noting that sessions were from Monday to Wednesday only.

Presently, he said only a "silence campaign" through publication of attendance records was being used to discourage absences.

A lack of quorum in the lower chamber has been blamed for the delay in the passage of the Cheaper Medicines Act of 2007, a bill deemed urgent by President Macapagal-Arroyo in her recent State of the Nation Address.

Quorum

A quorum is attained by adding 50 percent of the total number of sitting plus one.

So far a total of 224 congressmen have been proclaimed winners with three to come from various party-list groups.

Albay Rep. Edcel Lagman, another guest at the forum, agreed with the proposed penalties but doubted the products of attendance also plagued other countries.

"That's a worldwide problem. But if it becomes necessary we will impose a quorum," said the administration congressman, adding that Speaker Jose de Venecia would initiate reforms to restore the legislature's presence in sessions.

Rodriguez will also recommend a second roll call at 4 p.m., or before adjournment, to make sure legislators stayed until the four-hour session is finished.

"It's because some clutter the first roll call at 4 p.m., go to the lounge, then go home afterward. So with a second roll call, no one check-ups after roll is secured. If you're not there, you will be deemed absent for one session," he said.

He noted that there was no quorum during the last three sessions. "If we continue with this we will have less approved voting. It's our duty to attend the sessions," he stressed.

To speed up the process of legislation, Rodriguez also proposed that the number of committees be reduced, saying 71 was "too much" for those 242 congressmen.

Fewer committees

"The committee on appropriations alone has 110 members...that's almost everyone in the [H]. they only have 19 committees for 420-congressmen. We should form fewer committees to streamline the groups would be smaller," he said.

Lagman, meanwhile, advised neophytes to follow the example of experienced congressmen who were "more correctual."

Pilots asked if the deductions should be made on the path hailed instead of base salaries, Rodriguez disagreed and said the funds were "needed by constituents."

He also took the chance to thank the President for proposing to increase the budget of Medicare to 2008 from 35 percent to 50 percent, especially since the island has more than 20 million people.

"We asked that this be increased. We are happy that she saw this inequality because for the past 10 years, Mindanao has been contributing 20-30 percent to the national wealth," said Rodriguez.

An improved peace and order situation in Mindanao, the solon added, could be expected because of more livelihood opportunities.

"If there is no peace in Mindanao there will be no more development in the country," he said.

Christians, Muslims mob Bossi at homecoming

ENDLESSLY HUGGED: It's Christmas and New Year's Day and all things nice and wonderful when Fr. Eliseo de Bossi comes marching home to his parish and the people who welcomed the Italian priest like their nearest and dearest. (ARTY JUAN)

outside the parish church, sweating relentlessly Pepe while singing: "Where is Bossi? Where is Bossi?" (To the tune of "Are you sleeping.")

When the pickup truck carrying the 57-year-old missionary rolled up at around 11 a.m. and he stepped out of the vehicle, chaos descended on the street.

People shouted his name and rushed forward, wanting to see him up close, some walked, others kissed his hands. Some tried to touch his face. The children were all over him.

'Mano po'

Bossi looked overwhelmed. Smiling forward and taking the hands of the children, the women in the elderly, Bossi did a "mano po" gesture, followed by a blessing.

If everyone agreed on one thing, it was that their beloved priest had lost weight—some 40 pounds, in all, as a result of his captivity in the hands of gunmen who kidnapped him while he was on his way to Mass on June 19. He was rescued on July 20.

"Sanyo happy he is back," said Maximo Jalalo, a 18-year-old bricklayer boy who had waited for Bossi's arrival to pass by on a rough road leading to the San Pablo Parish Church.

No more Pepsee for Bossi

Edgar Oliveros, 33, said what he enjoyed most of Bossi was the priest's jokes and his "mano po."

Betsy Bisong Bossi's secretary for more than seven years, slipped away to a restaurant cried when she learned that Bossi would only be staying here for a few hours.

"We can't stop him. If only we could watch over him all the time. I hope when the situation is better, he would return," Bisong said.

Fr. Clemente Sandalo, regional superior of the Pontifical Institute of Foreign Missions (PIME), the congregation to which Bossi belongs, said the impression that they would not allow Bossi to return to Payao to continue his mission.

"No, we are not going to let him go to Payao again," Sandalo said, adding that there might be other ministries for Bossi but this would depend on his experience.

Asked why Bossi was no longer coming back, Sandalo said, "Because the place is not safe for him at this moment and he needs rest."

"We're going to bring him to Manila to check his stomach. After that he will return to his ministry," Sandalo said.

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Bossi met his mother, Ida Bossi, and his brother Ilario, a priest, in Manila on July 22.

Ilario left Zamboanga City on Tuesday for Manila "to see my ailing mother who is in the hospital as she is also combating serious with hypertension."

On Tuesday night, Bossi said in an interview that his return to Payao would be a way of saying goodbye to his people. He said he was told the place he had returned to to was "no longer safe for me."

Bossi said that prior to his kidnapping, two of his siblings back in Abbiategrasso, Milan, had planned to come to Payao for a vacation.

"Sayo lang very saysay, very among talaga! Ok's a pity, really a pity!," he said.

Pain deep inside

In Zamboanga, before leaving for Payao, Bossi said that deep inside him, he felt bad making the trip to the parish because it was Payao's city itself that was a mission.

"I am sad because I will be going back to my goodbye," he said.

He said he wanted to continue serving the people of Payao but people had told him the place was "no longer safe because."

Bossi said he would miss the people, who were like one only as their priest, but also their big father.

Bossi said he would return to his hometown in Italy to join his family.

"I will do most of my reflection together with my family," he said.

Biblical signs

Bossi said he had been trying to find answers to his kidnapping ordeal, which he said had "biblical signs."

"On the day he was kidnapped, it was the Feast of the Blood of Christ or Corpus Christi, he said.

"And I was kept inside the woods for 40 days and 40 nights and I was released on the 40th day. Let me meditate," he said.

"I admire Jesus Maravilla and other Pimeis about the meaning of it. I need time to sit together (with them) and think together to find out the meaning of it."

No Jonas when AFP goes to SC

his subordinates," AFP information chief Lt. Col. Bartolome Bacarro told reporters yesterday.

Bacarro said appearing before the appellate court was the only aspect of the Supreme Court order that the AFP would comply with.

But he said the military was considering the tribunal's order to a positive light. "This would provide the [AFP] the venue to once again reiterate that Jonas is not in our custody."

Army Defense Secretary and National Security Adviser Norberto Gonzales said he was not in a hurry to question the military and defense establishment would comply with the high court's order.

"How can we produce [Jonas]? We will try, we will try producing him, but I don't know how," Gonzales said. "We are very patient. We're still in the process of finding him. We don't have him, so how can we produce him?"

Responding to a petition filed on July 11 by Jonas' mother Edita Burgos, the Supreme Court last issued a writ of habeas corpus ordering the military to produce the 37-year-old agriculturist before the court at appeals tomorrow morning.

Burgos had accused the Army of abducting her son, who was forcibly taken from a Quezon City mall on April 28 and that he has been sorry since.

The named as respondents in her petition President Macapagal-Arroyo, AFP Chief of Staff Gen. Hermogenes Esperon and other military officials and Philippine National Police Director General Oscar Calderon.

'Bits'

Jonasis said the high court's issuance of the writ of habeas corpus was unnecessary but that Defense General Ignacio Bernardo would make a "factual answer."

"In the chief of staff said me, the manifestation just contained the fact that the AFP and the PNP do not have [Jonas] in their custody, so what is there to produce?" he said.

He also said the issuance of the writ of habeas corpus did not mean that Ma Arroyo as Commander in Chief was responsible for Jonas's disappearance.

Ermita said that from the beginning, there was "bias that the state is uniform and the AFP might be responsible for [Jonas'] disappearance" despite the government's sincere efforts in finding him.

"The AFP has been there looking for him. They are not in the position to produce [Jonas] not in their custody," Ermita said, adding that as soon as Jonas' location was pinpointed, the government would do everything in its power to "free him."

Like Esperon and other government officials, Gonzales insisted that Jonas was not in AFP custody.

He said that not only was the military looking for Jonas but also intelligence network had also been employing "informal and formal" means to locate Jonas.

Like blood from stone

Asked what feedback he was getting from his efforts, Gonzales revealed that it is like "not clear."

Junior Secretary Raul Gonzalez said the high court's order would be an exercise in futility because the military could only produce Jonas if it had him in its custody.

"Therefore still only be arbitrator if they have him. If they don't have him, how are they produce him? It's like squeezing blood from a stone. It's like our ordering you to produce your boyfriend, but what if you don't have a boyfriend?" Gonzalez told reporters.

Asked if he thought the hearing in the Court of Appeals would be useless, he said, "That will depend [on whether] there are other people who will go there and give information."

Both Gonzalez and Army spokesperson Lt. Col. Ernesto Torres said the military had supported and continued to meet efforts to gather information counsel covering Jonas' case.

"Whatever is our opportunities or we, they are ready at the in fact that what had happened in the manner stated MC Jonas forgot right now, it would be in the AFP," Gonzales said.

He said the AFP had been the subject of allegations that it was behind Jonas' abduction, and this was why "we are in no respect to anybody [who] to find out what really happened."

With reports from Mikhael Liwa [Dau] and Leila B. Salaverria

'So what if Jonas is Red'

By Kristine L. Alave

"SO WHAT IF HE'S A MEMBER of the NPA?"

Commission on Human Rights (CHR) Chair Purificacion Quisumbing countered when Army chief Lt. Gen. Roman Tolentino's claim that Jonas Burgos was a member of the New People's Army, the armed wing of the Communist Party of the Philippines—a claim that was neither denied nor confirmed by the CHR.

If he were, he should have been arrested, not forcibly taken away, Quisumbing said in an ambush interview at the Club Filipino in San Juan City where she was attending an event by The Manila Times.

She said mere membership in the NPA was "not a problem" because the Marcos-era Anti-Subversion Law was repealed in 1992, making communism legal in the Philippines.

Quisumbing said an NPA member who had violated Philippine laws may be arrested, but not on the basis on his or her membership.

"Have long very saysay, very among talaga! Ok's a pity, really a pity!," he said.

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Polio caged him but not his dream

"I became a voracious reader and finished the books of my brothers and sisters before they did. I always read all the pages of the newspaper my father read since I was 8 years old," Bernardo says.

In his teens, Bernardo indulged in writing Filipino fiction and comics scripts that he sent to publishers. His elder sister, a nursing student, typed the manuscripts while his younger brother Alberto, 16 at the time, helped her. Later, Alberto followed in their tapping by himself when his elder began internship.

"I kept mailing the fiction pieces I wrote, only to receive rejection slips. After 36 rejections, one editor saw my raw text and published my short story," he laughs.

From then on, Bernardo's stories were published in Liwayway Magazine in its "Pitak ng Bagong Kabataan" section. Two of the titles published in 1956 included "Dalid Mahal Kita," "Hintay ay Pagsasawalad," "Hindi Ako Mapagpalo."

Budding writer

In an article titled "Bagong Dekada ng mga Bagong Mamamahayag" by Armando T. Javier and published on Dec. 31, 1990, in Liwayway Magazine, Bernardo was named one of the budding fiction writers in Filipino.

One day a television feature of the work of Tahanang Walang Hagdan grabbed his attention. It sparked hope in his heart, he says, because it featured disabled individuals learning to be independent.

He wrote a 12-page letter requesting his doctor to be a recipient of the charity group.

"When I received the response of the administrator of the Tahanang Walang Hagdan, he said it was still all up to me to come here for employment. I need of the consent of my parents," Bernardo says.

He recalls he was shaking with fear at the thought of telling his parents he wanted to leave and be on his own but finally mustered the courage and did so in a four-page letter.

Parents say sorry

"Immediately, my mother wept after reading my letter. My father, however, had known on his own disciplinarian, also broke down. They hugged me and told me how sorry they were for all those years of my isolation and indifference toward my physical impairment," he says.

Bernardo says he had never been happier after that, knowing he had earned the parents' support and respect. He says he has totally forgiven his parents.

"They accompanied me to Manila and brought me to the Tahanang Walang Hagdan. I was overwhelmed with happiness when I was given my own wheelchair which for me was a symbol of my freedom and independence. I took a placement test

SEE BERNARDO: receives his Master of Development Management diploma in 2002 from Dean Ernesto Gostho and AIM president Roberto de Ocampo, and became the only second orientalist-bound student to earn a full degree at the famed business school. (LOURDES PUNZALAN)

for out-of-school youth and passed it very satisfactorily, which accelerated me all the way to the college level," he says.

IN THE KNOW

What is polio?

POLIOMYELITIS, OR POLIO, IS a highly infectious disease that can lead to paralysis and death. It is caused by a virus that spreads through human waste. Thus, polio is more rampant in places with substandard sanitation systems.

More than half of all polio cases involve children below three years of age. They usually get the disease from contaminated food or water.

The polio virus multiplies in the intestines. In one out of 200 cases, it destroys nerves that activate muscles, leading to irreversible paralysis. Leg muscles are affected most often than arm muscles.

Among those paralyzed, 5 to 10 percent die due to the immobilization of breathing muscles.

Symptoms of polio include fever, fatigue, vomiting, neck stiffness and leg and arm pains.

There is no cure for polio, but vaccination can prevent it. The disease was brought under control after the introduction of effective vaccines in the late 1950s. Today, only seven countries worldwide remain polio-endemic, according to the Global Polio Eradication Initiative. Almost all polio cases (98 percent) are found in India, Nigeria and Pakistan.

In October 2000, the World Health Organization declared the entire Western Pacific region, including the Philippines, polio-free. However, Indonesia suddenly recorded over 200 polio cases in 2005. (cyd L. Boncaboncan, Inquirer Research)

Phenomenal acceleration

Even without formal elementary and high school education, Bernardo's acceleration to tertiary education was phenomenal. He successfully passed the Philippine College and entered a degree in Bachelor of Science in Psychology.

While in college, he helped found the Nonwalker Concerned Disabled Students (CDS) to put into the forefront the interests and issues of students with disability.

Elected vice chair of the student council, Bernardo was able to successfully push for the creation of the Trinity College's Disabled Students' Concerns and Empowerment Program.

Except for 1996 that ended the school recognition as the First Disabled-friendly School in the country.

The program introduced makeover in the curriculum and physical environment to suit the needs of disabled—like the construction of ramps all over the campus. When he graduated, he was appointed its coordinator.

Helping others

"When I sat in the student council, I was interested in a disabled person's welfare. I was once a polio, too. Mine so, when I started my wife Marivic, people asked me how I could possibly defend and provide for her," he says.

At present, Bernardo is the director of the Research and Development, Marketing and Promotions of Ateneo College's love while at the same time teaching accountancy.

Bernardo's impressive educational background shows that physically impaired individuals are capable of achieving personal and social goals like any normal person.

Citations

His citations include Recognition Award for Student Leadership (2002) from the Junior Institute of Management (JIM), Ateneo and Howard Gask Award for Leadership Excellence (2000) from University of Sydney and Student Leadership Excellence award (1998) from Trinity College.

Upon completing his studies, he got a number of scholarships at AIM, University of Sydney and his alma mater, earning him master's degree in development management, human resource management and industrial relations.

Though his 1996 thesis about the school recognition as the First Disabled-friendly School in the country.

The program introduced makeover in the curriculum and

"The person's political career is not important. "If he violated the law[, you give him due process," she said.

Quisumbing said the Army's statement that Burgos was in the NPA, meanwhile, concerned her. She said the Army could save it as an excuse to justify to serious.

Quisumbing also hailed the Supreme Court's order for the Armed Forces to produce Jonas, saying it was high time somebody from inside accountable to the disappearance and deaths of hundreds of leftist activists.

"We should commend the Supreme Court for finding a way," Quisumbing said.

She pointed out that the high court's writ of habeas corpus per had vindicated the CHR, which had been snubbed by military officials during its inquiry into Jonas' abduction.

Jonas, a son of the late press freedom fighter Jose Burgos, had been going outboard training to members of the shipmining Maybubukid Bulanon, a local chapter of the militant Kilusang Mayo-bukid ng Pilipinas, since 1990.

NBI summons local head of forex firm

By Tina G. Santos

THE NATIONAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION has summoned one of the Filipino incorporators of the Bermudan investment Professional Corp. (PIPC), a foreign exchange trading firm whose foreign partners have disappeared with at least $250 million of investors' money.

Oscar Imbido, assistant regional director and chief of the NBI anti-organized crime division, said a subpoena had been issued on Tuesday to Cristina Gonzales-Tuason, the Filipino general manager of PIPC.

Class suit

"We want to confirm her regarding the allegations of several investors that she was the one who entertained, enticed and encouraged clients to invest money in the company," Imbido told reporters.

He said the subpoena was sent to the PIPC office at Citibank Towers in Makati. He expects Tuason to appear before the NBI on July 31.

"It is also possible that she will just send her lawyer," Imbido said.

Meanwhile, the group of investors that was expected to file yesterday a class suit against the incorporators of the firm, particularly Tuason and Richard H.K. Low, the Singaporean owners of PIPC, have decided to postpone the filing.

Interpol's help

Lawyer Jules Jalar Ishiga, counsel for some of the PIPC investors who intended to file "large-scale syndicated estafa" against Tuason and Low, said they were still talking with other investors and getting together the necessary documents.

Imbido explained that complaints from only five people can not be considered a class suit.

"There has to be at least 10 complainants for it to be called a class suit. But through media, other victims may be enticed to come out in the open and file charges," he said.

"We will treat (each case) as an individual complaint, a separate transaction," he said.

The PIPC case first came to light when Tuason wrote the NBI on July 19, seeking help from the Interpol in tracing the whereabouts of Low, the owner of the PIPC in the British Virgin Islands Performance Investment, BVI.

Low is also the president of PIPC, the local subsidiary of the Performance Investment, BVI.

In her letter, Tuason said Low had "unlawfully taken the money" of Performance Investment "to the grave prejudice of its investors, including herself."

But her last week, the Filipino investors were told that Low had absconded with their money and that the bank accounts which held their investments had been emptied and closed.

Some investors who came to the NBI, however, believe that Tuason was also liable because she was the firm's local incorporator and that she herself had recruited others to invest in the PIPC.

Text message

Meanwhile, a text message which reportedly came from Tuason has been circulating among investors. It read:

"Hi, _____. PIPC has just engaged the services of former Hongkong Limited air international bermuda agency who specializes in bermuda accounting, financial investigation and fraud services to locate Richard Low, our funds and see if there is enough grounds to prosecute ASK Jules. You can check their website: www.fi.com.bd. They will be presenting to clients on Thursday. I will text you the details of the meeting. The management has also put up a website to address matters of the situation. Try to log on to www.findirectbailbow.com"

The Dutch-based ABN Amro was one of the foreign banks in which PIPC investors maintained accounts in which PIPC redirected their profits and dividends.

An investor, who refused to be named, said that the website and text message were created by Tuason to pacify irate investors.

"There is a scheduled investors' meeting at their Makati office on Thursday (today) but I'm not certain if the gathering will push through after the scam was exposed," said another investor, a businessman in his 50s.

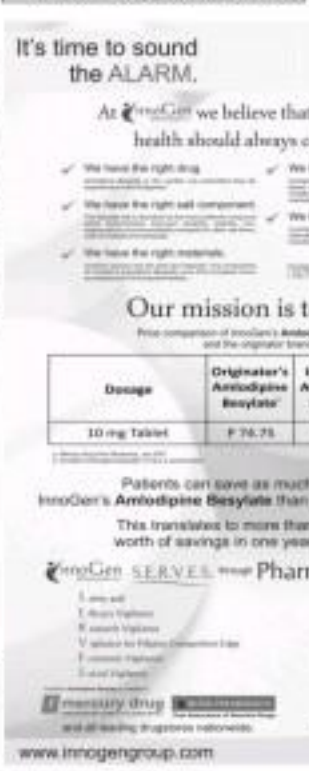
Security Bank asks SC to reject PCGG appeal

THE SECURITY BANK AND TRUST COMPANY has asked the Sandiganbayan to reject the government's appeal on an earlier ruling junking its bid to recover some P386 million in acquired Marcos deposits supposedly held by the bank.

The bank maintained that the Presidential Commission on Good Government has no proper position the validity of its documentary evidence since its court-issued bail confirmed the "genuineness and existence" of such deposits of the Marcos deposits.

PCGG chairperson Virginia Ponce-Enrile and lead Sandiganbayan prosecutor Jose Balmaceda argued in their petition that the bank's bail bond was "spurious."

"The plaintiff" said the docket but no defendant in the court filed the in-house audit report presented by defendants was obtained from the records of the PCGG. The documentary evidence were in the custody and possession of PCGG since 1986," they said in a 13-page opposition dated July 20.



VOL. XXIV, NO. 228 INQUIRER

OPINION

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Just do it

ON THE ISSUE OF POLITICAL KILLINGS, THE monstrous blight that disfigures the record of the Arroyo administration, this year's State of the Nation Address was a marked improvement over the last one. It is a measure of the credibility deficit that haunts President Macapagal-Arroyo, however, that she finds her policy statements on the killings ignored or second-guessed.

EDITORIAL

She did, in fact, say some of the right things. She called on Congress to pass "laws reserving the harshest penalties for the rogue elements in the uniformed services who betray public trust and bring shame to the greater number of their colleagues who are patriotic." She also gave marching orders that were half plaintive and half resolute: "We must swipe this stain from our democratic record."

The President did not only say some of the right things; she also did not say the wrong things. Unlike last year's address, she did not undermine her own message by praising the military officer accused of "inspiring" many of the killings. Instead, she acknowledged, at long last, that "rogue elements" in the military and the police may be behind the killings (and the politically motivated disappearances, too).

That is a conviction that many members of the uniformed services hold, too, albeit in silence; they feel, more than most, the opprobrium, the shame, that the ordinary soldiers or policemen "who are patriotic" endure.

And yet, despite all this, the President has run into resistance—not the militant resistance of the Left-wing groups, for instance, who mistakenly boycotted the hearings of the Melo Commission because of the fact-finding body's provenance, but the thoroughgoing skepticism, or the outright lack of belief even, that antagonized citizens have expressed toward her new policies.

This nonreleasee reception can be narrated up easily enough. It is not enough to say the right things; the President must do the right things.

Consider the many recommendations tendered by the "national consultative summit" on the killings and the disappearances organized by the Supreme Court. Indeed, consider the summit itself. It did not merit a single mention in the State Gotinski, the presence of the Chief Justice, Reynato Puno, was acknowledged by a beaming President. And certainly, a proposal of the executive that was unanimously acted upon by the judiciary, the creation of "special courts," was given specific mention. But the summit itself—easily. The recommendations of the summit—not a word.

As a result, the President's proposals to stem the tide of political killings and politically motivated disappearances look like so much buck-passing. The summit had appealed to the President to put a stop to the killings and the disappearances; instead, she called on Congress to pass laws that will "transform state response to political violence."

Certainly, some enabling legislation is necessary—to define the parameters of command responsibility, for instance, or to determine the limits of "access orders" to military facilities. But legislation alone is not the answer. The Supreme Court's enlightened intervention, for example, through the revision of the rules of court or of evidence, is not the sole answer either. The executive must do its part.

The President called on Congress to enact a law protecting witnesses "from law breakers and law enforcers." But she did not promise to fight for a much bigger budget for the Witness Protection Program. Such a promise would have been both a statement and a call to action.

She called on Congress to impose "harsher penalties" on perpetrators of political violence. But what can be harsher than reclusion perpetua, which is already provided for in murder cases? Instead, she could have announced a stricter implementation of existing provisions on command responsibility in the military. The police have a three-strike policy on the illegal members (some of whom could have prosecuted a similar policy for, say, divisive commanders. Such an announcement would have been both a statement and a call to arms.

As it is, all the right things the President said reinforced the perception that, on the issue of the killings, the administration is still largely in denial.

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Unasked questions

VIEWPOINT

Juan L. Mercado

THERE'S MEN A CLOT OF POLITICAL CHUTZPAH for the President's aweirds—and all so believe—frame of the Union Address. OK. That comes with the turf. But aren't human gifts more than "wish" but more vital issues?

Like school? Like not limpkyds, as the tabloid, of a medical examination that the Palo alumnus required to get $4.4 billion by 30 (3).

In "Patients Without Borders," Josef Woodman estimates that more than 150,000 North Americans and Europeans now seek medical treatment overseas in Thailand, Singapore, India, Malaysia or Mexico—far more while having pampered like SDs. Hordes and princes congregate in the Peninsular Lounge of Spain's Delfin hospital.

Consider Bangkok's Bumrungrad Hospital, just off Sukhumvit Street, is considered one of the world's top 10 "Medical Meccas." The medical staff is world class. And so is equipment. Wait-to-patient ratio are a specialist in 25 minutes on average. That says something to Filipinos who don't bank, count in private hospitals, for hours. Last year, Bumrungrad treated 400,000 foreign patients from more than 150 countries, for everything, from heart disease, hip replacements to implants for those patients penis boobs.

Here, hospitals, like St. Luke's, have established clinics abroad. But that's not new. Nor is it mainly limited to skin and weight problems, ophthalmology and dental service. Other countries "have a formidable headstart," estimates a study by Antony Gootzin Gotchi and Gabriel Mendiola Holguin. Executive Order 372 launched a program mainly here in reverse.

Limousines pick up Bumrungrad patients at the airport. And check in gave Phuket America a run for its money. Chonburi staffing could attract red-carpet treatment all the way from Iloilo to your room or operating theater, serving as host, follow up to spa treatments—and return via Phuket and Chiang Mai. "We believe the sun rising that people more in health care but don't expect to get—service," says Robert Total, Bumrungrad marketing director.

Today, it swings to more necessary medical procedures and bridges a gap for uninsured and underinsured.

"This promise has been going on in other countries for years," note tourism analysts. "Companies are discovering that sending an employee abroad for medical care can save 80 percent of the costs."

New forms of medical tourism are emerging. Blue Cross Blue Shield Association includes Bumrungrad Hospitals in India in its worldwide network of participating hospitals. In Thailand, Bumrungrad, Bangkok, which caters to self-insured companies, offers options for medical care at Bumrungrad.

This is about big bucks industry run servers. Share prices of Bumrungrad Hospital quadrupled in the last one-seven years as it built on 18-story outpatient center. That will double the hospital's capacity to 6,000 outpatients per day.

Similar high-end hospitals are emerging in Chiang Mai.

"Why isn't this happening in the Philippines?" asks United Medical Services Patrick Shaw, assistant to the Board and Agribusiness Regional Office in Bangkok. "What's the problem? The country has the doctors, nurses, certified environment. If given half a chance for more pain and less economy, they'd not migrate."

"Even more basic, it has plenty of English speakers," notes Dunn, who is married to a Filipina. "People have gentle and caring attitudes, players of smiles. The country has experts from Ivy League universities and Harvard, and other schools."

"But there policy uncertainties? Lack of investment? Lack of stocks? Lack of investors? Both ins.... I would have thought this is a natural for the Philippines. But the country is being outperformed by others. Somebody should tell me the why."

Sorry. But nobody asks impolite questions in front of the Hunter drills.

E-mail: jmercado@inquirer.com.ph

Lying in state

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros

BY THE MOMENTS THAT I MANAGED TO stay awake last Monday afternoon, I thought I was listening to President Alonso delivering his state-of-the-nation address all over again. That was so for several reasons.

One was that this was the most number of hours by any Filipino head of state since Marcos. This was Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo's seventh. Cory had only one, Fidel Ramos four, Erap zero, and Joseph Estrada had only three. All of the above were somewhat recognized as the legitimate presidents of the Philippines. GMA, like Marcos in later during martial law, is not.

Another reason was that the speech was heavy on allies, their wives and/or husbands locked in a piddling season of flowery and lavish, applauding on cue. The TV reporters would report afterward that this year the most applauded of Gloria's lines was that "we are now into our last year recovering or inspiring speech, that means her audience was the most ingratiating and obsequious even ever dragged in the Batasan since Marcos. The speech, in fact, might be described as a Marcos speech minus arrogance and minus the quite literally rousing applause.

There were the litany of facts and figures. That was how Marcos' speeches were too then. They were a recitation of the presumed economic and social achievements of martial law, martial law, from the fifth and Mangoma 66 to the pork and export processing zones. The only difference was that Marcos at least began his speeches with bombast and grand gesture, specifically with sweeping claims of unprecedented and world-class achievements. But the Broken Tines that head GMA's speech straight to the bottom. She's a born resistance down. She doesn't go for cute cub openings; she goes for no-to openings.

Four, Marcos inherited from two humongous problems, quite apart from the one about bicameralism, and those were corruption and separatism. The locus of corruption came to the fore specifically after Ninoy Aquino came out with "Some Are Smarter Than Others," though that was originally anonymous and distributed only by faxes. The equivalent was plastic.

Today, GMA inherits from two humongous problems, quite apart from the one about the legitimacy, and those are corruption and the killings. The locus of corruption came to the fore specifically after the Hong Kong-based Political and Economic Risk Consultancy ranked the Philippines in March this year the most corrupt country in Asia. The killing of journalists and political activists, already a source of alarm for the international community, and human rights monitors, took on epic proportions with the admission and disappearance of Jonas Burgos.

Then Marcos ignored the issues of graft and corruption in his home. Now GMA ignores the issues of graft and murder/s in her home.

Five, one peculiar passenger would react fatally to GMA's home in this wise: "Some of GMA's Batasang kasinungalingan? (GMA's home? There's all that.)." There's something to be said for that, of course. Not that said issue, the one about a pet was more than that the Santa I was hearing was a pack of lies, it was that a cagey bequeath a new reality on the one the public perceived. Some are always given to lies and deceptions. Marcos was always given to lies and deceptions. What was new, Erap's was. The difference between their homes and GMA's and Marcos' was the first had had some resemblance to reality, the second, for all their apparent dedication to lies and lies, had none. GMA got it but once! She was reveling not in fantasyland Kingdom. Many though would not necessarily disagree the word "enchanted."

Six, GMA would say, "I'd rather be right than popular." I do not recall that Marcos spoke in the cadre of conceding he was not popular. What I recall was that he cared massively claimed an assistance as he a bit with the "silent majority." Cory being a bit catty with the "camouflage cut minority." But Marcos did keep supporting class, one, that ruling was not a popularity contest.

That ruling is not a popularity contest, but it is not an unpopularity contest either. GMA and Marcos were/are not just not popular, they are tremendously unpopular. In GMA's case as seen in the most candid expression of her sensibilities but May I know we just will always please the people with her policies, but I know as well that no ruler can ever rule, let alone bring about prosperity, when he or she is constantly at war, antagonistic with the people.

Which raises the question: If you would rather be right than popular, who determines what is right? Last I looked, in a democracy it was the people who determined what was right—not from within the hermetic their presidency. Last I looked, in a democracy it was the leader who followed the will of the people and not the people who obeyed the whim of their president—even a real one. But then and now, you see in the same cagey expression of her sensibilities, but May I know we just will always please the people with her policies, but I know as well that no ruler can ever rule, let alone bring about prosperity, when he or she is constantly at war, antagonistic with the people.

Seventh, GMA would tell her audience that she would not stand in the way of anyone's presidential ambitions but would not stand idly by if they were against the national interest. Always. Other anti-terrorist presidential wannabes would take exception to that, saying the latter sounded like a threat. It was, the question as indicated above being whether she could differentiate national vision from personal ambition. Ninoy and other powerful enemies that GMA did not make clear whether she would go after 2010 or not.

That was the part that did not remind me of Marcos. Marcos at least you could pin down as his enemy, which was why he kept refusing to say unequivocally, as Edgar Jopson and others demanded, that he would leave after 1973. GMA, well, I did write a couple of months ago that if you demand that she unequivocally says she will leave after 2010 or 2016, she just always says "I'll sign the papers, in triplicate of two years."

And you'd be no better off than before.

UK may extend detention sans charge to 45 days

BY PIA'S CLEAR FROM PRESIDENT MACAPAGAL-Arroyo's State of the Nation Address that combating the country's criminality is progress by 2009. It is the legacy she wants to leave behind. This has prompted her critics and Pinoy global credit agency to ask how the administration would take the country to the next level. P1.227 trillion budget for 2008, up from 2006's P1.126 trillion budget, gives clear the year's budget deficit target but the worst is in.

Political Tidbits

Belinda Olivares-Cunanan

And it's a parking lot. The presumption of what would have been deadly attacks in two separate cities and the quick investigation of those involved drew praises. The law enforcement establishment wants us also to see the rest of the record: contrary to what the July 7, 2005 bombings in the London subways, which killed 53 people and wounded hundreds of others.

Two things would not involve recent bombings in mosques. They were carried out by terrorists working with Britain's health care system. A month of the Glasgow bomber was arrested at Glasgow Airport in Australia while en route to be the first was later released on bail due to lack of evidence. The cars used in the failed bombings were one Mercedes-Benzes and a Jeep Cherokee, not the usual suspicious vehicles. The UK population is also not a hotbed of terrorists. It is a land of job profitable jobs and have a rosy future ahead of them, and had trained for a long time in case they could be recruited or undertaken hundred suicide missions. But then, as one senior source in Muhammad Asia, the police behind the Sept. 11, 2001 destruction of the World Trade Center in New York, was an architect. Britain's immigration policies are now being reviewed.

The failed car bombings in the UK recalled the bombings in Madrid, Spain in 2004 which killed scores of people. It has been said that in 2000 alone, some 200 terrorist suspects have been let go because of various European countries' terror-related acquittals, while others were apprehended for various financing, kidnapping, and "spreading propaganda." The police and intelligence agencies of Prime Minister Gordon Brown's new chief of security, Alex de Waal, Wen, to warn that terrorism could be around for at least 10 years. New encouraged citizens to engage in the "un-British practice" of "snitching," i.e., telling on their neighbors. Then Metropolitan Police Commissioner Ian Blair, who recently retired as chief of MI5, also warned of the existence of some 200 networks of terrorists in the UK and pointed out that more than 300 suspects remain at large. Al Qaeda's recruiters cannot be discounted of "an imminent chemical or biological bomb attack."

* * *

So I sense the other day all these developments have not affected the British many of whom had been involved in more stressful situations in the height of the Irish Republican Army's attacks in the 1990s. (I remember between the UK government and the IRA has been intermittently holding up since 1997, giving hope to many other players where dissidences is going on, such as ISF and Spain.) One British person I spoke with said that the UK has experienced more bombs in the underwear lately. Very eventually, Brown came with the formulation of Chiefs of Police Officials and Internet at the latter pleaded that an extension of the 28 days to 42 days for detaining terrorists suspects without charges. Under earlier British law, this was allowed for 14 days, but in the aftermath of the 2005 London bombings and terrorism attempts on airplanes planes, former Prime Minister Tony Blair asked the House of Commons to extend the period of detention without charge to 90 days. That deadline turned him down and finally compromised on 28 days. Now Brown is back to the 42 days demanding 89 days. It has been reported that Parliament and Brown might agree on 42 days. In the raging debates in the UK, human rights advocates have been left out in the cold. The right to freedom in the guise of promoting the "common weal," but the British public is said to be receptive to extension.

Interestingly, while the world's oldest parliament may change the 28 days detention without charge to 42 days detention, our homegrown lawmakers are wasting time bash over the three days detention without charge. Under the Anti-Human Security Act, and have asked the Supreme Court to declare it unconstitutional.

A clean, well-lighted place

Ma. Ceres P. Doyo

ON JUNE 30, 1980 (THAT MAY 11 YEARS AGO), just before the new president, Nidel Ramos, was to be sworn in, I was somewhere in Camp Crame, waiting for our photographer. I was to be the first to interview somewhere so I could be home in time for the swearing in on TV.

I was doing a magazine story and I forgot now what it was. But when I turned over to be photographed side-by-encounter with a bundle of soon-to-be-sworn-in-first in our publication.

The incident's name was Evangeline Guinsatao. She was 34 but looked 24. She was age was Julie and Jennifer, and her son was Michael. Her children were aged 3 to 13. The eldest looked like she was 6 and had only been at Grade 1. She beamed a message for mail bombs and some, unidentified powder.

If Evangeline is still alive, she should be 60 by now and she's, maybe, 59 children. When I asked her then what's she was going to give birth she answered, "Ang sa sa ako eh." Being now about to give birth.

Even then I was going to be seven in all. The two wouldn't be a would have become one small for the growing brood.

I was not sure if Evangeline had to live with her mother. She had a dirt and, a rusty shotgun home, a dirty utility tent, a broom—just like what you'd find in any home. You bet she didn't know there was a new guy up there and newly sworn-in president who was going to change her life.

The guise was swimming in my head as I was watching President Macapagal-Arroyo deliver her seventh State of the Nation Address (State the Nation's Address). Her speech was long, technically-stilted. "Thorny" and "ballooning." Shrewdsight and truth-in-keeps as a premier's browsing and she later delving heavy at a community's progress. So how to move forward if one is not equipped with the proper education and does not have the physical energy to do what needs to be done?

An easy to say is almost sounds cliché. But it is obvious. It not planting, that those two—drawing of technology—are really what the engine of the economy. Of the options are going by. New knowledge and talent are born plenty of, but we are indeed a gifted race, but to have those and channels those into progress and a better life requires more.

While I tend to agree with the research-based government that the Filipinos are among the happiest in the world, I would probably give credit to "genes and environment" and maybe to the fact that the rose of affairs in our surroundings. Yes, we have fewer murders compared with the rest of them nations, but it is because living long enough has become a reward?

And poverty is the killer, the day the President was delivering her SONA a desperate man was again high up there on one of the billboards from here, about to call it quits because he had lost his job in Manila's construction industry. The police climb in one, everything else gave meaning to his life. MMDA Chair Bayani Fernando's assessment that he would have his job back gave the man reason to live. That was all it took to give him "another day."

Psychologist Abraham Maslow's "Hierarchy of Needs" which is very much part of his theory of personality has long been referred to the very basic, the physiological needs, which are food, water, oxygen called the preconscious. Maslow is more of a humanist who focuses on the potentials of personality, their search for higher wisdom, understanding, creativity. Therefore, if the environment is ample, proper food, water, oxygen, and the like, the same actualized, fully grown, happy. That is real-or-said than done, of course.

Here is the summary of Maslow's "Hierarchy of Needs" which could be represented in a triangle (1) physiological needs, (2) safety needs, (3) love needs, (4) esteem needs, and (5) self-actualization. We all have to remember these to Psychology class.

I was rethinking these things on Saturday in the Senate and the President's list of accomplishments and the sound of feather-fluffing and she her plans for her three remaining years in office. Which of those would be key priorities helped to meet immediately? If surveys are to be believed, most Filipinos are still struggling with numbers 1 and 2. Food, water, the basics to survive.

When will the middle-down-ers be up?

My guess is not many people will go "a clean, well-lighted place," to borrow the title of Hemingway's famous, but short story. A place to be, to stay, to feel safe in, to belong. Clean and well-lighted, where the body and spirit can feel free and comfortable.

Hemingway's contemporary story, though set in a small cafe with a little frame of a few hours, is about basic workings for a safe haven, not just in the here and now, but for the long haul.

Respect is a major element in the many popular interpretations of the Nobel Prize winner's core words. In our reasoning and sense of purpose.

For all practical purposes, we have a Republican plan. The only piece in this country have their local specifications: a home they can call their own, clean water, nutritious food, good neighbors. And don't forget the music.

Ah, yes, the music of life. Osborne Sim, 1935, whole four that it was not Sunday, and many years ago, when she took on a leadership position. London's London, "Today, as we live during the Depression, we are all in the same boat." The key to keep from sinking is to make sure that the boat is kept free. Such way I make could build a dreamy, some hope to create or to share. Perhaps she would will be better because I was born. But while every filter of my being is immersed in the frenzy of service and passion, deep in my soul, nothing matters except that on the day of reckoning, the One for whom I lived my life is strong, gingerly, will see me face . . . and recognize it."

* * *

Send feedback to ceresp@inkpub.com.ph

On the same street

A POLICE OFFICER, FOR A FRIEND, AND A HELPFUL ACquaintance for a daughter. "What a great source" people would ever remark about us. Most people probably think the wife thing we have to continue to see "Mrs" under age. Sometimes we unwound bond that is far stronger than any blood-relationship: our principles.

Daddy has always been simple, clean and serious. He has the looks and bearing of a military officer: short hair, erect posture, no vices, and cordial conduct. He is a bit unsocial, but tolerant with with everyone, including those he despises. He prefers to read the newspapers or watch the news while sipping hot tea in the morning with the neighbors. He has never been inordinately conscious about being an officer or the law and never has he bragged about his position.

His idea of fun is devoted to family outdoorsiness and play time for him is almost non-existent. When we were young, our mantra was "mostly work and mostly." On school days, the "I am not sure" was the only time we were able to go to movies in a State Fiesta night or Saturday night. He insisted that we take our studies seriously.

Most of his expectations were impossible. But I never took it against him. After all, we—Nenen knew to prise the field and we never had any reason to think that he liked his several kilometers we got to school, and we made a business to commute for snacks. Which was what he did in his years.

Who can blame Daddy? He was a poor farmer's son who had to work his way through college, taking janitorial jobs. He graduated cum laude from law school and became second in the Philippine Bar Exams. But he would never be no longer about it, saying, "Ako, hindi ang ng magsasaka, nahuhuyo ako. Kaya, hindi kaya ng upuan, dapat mas malapit manatong ako. I was a farmer's son, and yes I was able to finish college. We are children of a police officer, so you shouldn't have any excuses."

Despite his meager salary he excelled as in a small town private school. He called it a very good investment. "It doesn't matter if we would be reduced to licking salt, as long as you have a good education," he told us. "That is the only thing I can leave you, as one heirs inheritance."

I think he was right on the money. I fell short of his expectations, but I always knew he had the love. Sometimes I did my love to excel in my academics.

Another reason that Daddy passed on to us, which is much more precious than our education, is integrity. At a time when the word "integrity" is bandied about in semantics by as many cases of ill-gotten wealth, graft and corruption, organized crime, human rights violations, and electoral fraud, Daddy was one of the few good men who withstood the temptations of greed and power. While many generals have close relatives, are connected to the rich and powerful, while many of his colleagues drove SUVs and kept mistresses in the garage, Dad rode upon 32 years in the service, only owned a worn out, assembled jeep of the kind that you see in our Filipino movies, it was only after his retirement, when he got his benefits, that he was able to buy his first brand-new vehicle.

During his years in the service, he was offered all sumptuous barracks, with food being measured and distributed equally among us. There were times when my brothers and I had to settle for any sauce and salamanot with our because we were sufficiently I learned to drink six cups of coffee a day to pass the any grueling courses. Many of our friends and relatives were fair-weather friends. In college, I would sometimes run football, or banana out, or take the lunch because my food allowance were less pleasure-giving our lessons.

I often wondered why we were so impoverished while some of the kids I knew and whose fathers were lawyers without any more education than I had were living in mansions and driving around in brand-new cars. Dad would never look twice anything grand—just packet of bakoys and small pots of bakoys. They were paralyzing from his subordinates swearing from contracts in the provinces. My Dad said he did not want to lead us with dirty money. We may be poor but we would keep our dignity intact. He was afraid of bartter.

At 18, I was already working and had been earning taken I joined the military group Acadiopan. Although we had somewhat conflicting ideologies, he never stopped me from pursuing my crusade of serving the people in a humanwork-different from me. Up to now he does not have anything against the communist party ideology, he's decided to remain neutral, he insisted, but supervised injustice and witnessed it happen in the armed services and the government.

He would often discuss politics, and dispassionate debates became a normal happening at home. But we never clashed. Instead, we learned to listen to each other.

I remember one strike at Manila Hotel in 2006, where I joined the picket line of the oppressed workers together with other activists. He stayed behind the police out where he stood as one of the ground commanders, while I linked arms with the protesters. He never asked anyone I was among the protesters, or the group who would storm our office with stones or disperse us. I never pointed to him as my dad either. It was a silent pact between us, but would exchange brief looks, then go on with what we had to do.

After every confrontation, he would be relieved to see me return safe and sound. He would always tell me to be careful in the line of duty. I would always tell him to be careful in the line of duty. I would always tell him to be careful in the line of duty.

But despite all of this, he never asked me to abandon the movement. I would never believe who would pressed, threatened, back up, or beat up to keep me from my duty. I had to pursuing their cause, but just in one he. And I will always be grateful to him for that.

Dad is retired now, while I remain an activist. He has his convictions, and I my own set of rules. We both believe in service and this principle has taught me that blinds us, even wrestling ego, social roles and family ties.

Daddy and I stood on opposite sides of the street, and we hailed like foes in the eyes of many. However, we are on the same street. The real adversary is on another.

Janice Gambit Sun Jose, 27, is completing her MS thesis at the University of the Philippines in Diliman.

Young Blood

Janice Gambit Sun Jose

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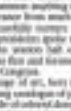
Back to basics



Manuel L. Quezon III

THE OTHER DAY I WAS ASKED ON THEIR Mustang's AM show for my views on the future of the Senate Address. I'd like to elaborate on what, in my mind, is a more productive approach to evaluating the president's performance.

It begins with approaching the State as a speech aimed at three different audiences. It is an appeal to the faithful, to a leader's supporters, allies and followers. It is also a speech aiming to win over those on other branch or a leader's critics or enemies. And it provides the means to mark out, engage and model how the public on large, whether foreign or domestic.

Listening to, watching, or reading the State of the Nation Address, I look for signs that they're for the faithful: both in terms of promises and how the president addresses them and speeds our own path. In State, but political capital.

Take the case of Senator Bernardo Sotto, a president in this and between. Read of the rallies are family-that is the nation, as we speak! income and the state of the Senate as a means of overcoming congressional opposition as an State. At last, the Legislature needs to be reminded by the most conservative elements of our society who represent particular interests.

As an effort, then, a president has a larger constituency than just those immediately in the House. He speaks mission, a president has a constitutionally ordained opportunity, each year, to set the national agenda.

Seeing that agenda, however, requires more than mere presidential effort. It requires legislative, attitude harmonizers an individual's identity and the position he holds in the national interest. Any is requires attention, which the occasion of a speech virtually guarantees, but it also requires of a president's ability to hold the attention of his or her audience, and this requires the ability to communicate to multiple audiences.

Traditionally, a large chunk of the presidency is spent addressing the Senate and Congress as a whole. President Macapagal-Arroyo is handicapped in this regard. In which case, instead of the traditional overhead-looking nature of the presidency, she has cultivated an unusually direct relationship

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Math teacher reveals how he survived in US

THIS REFERS TO THE "REQUIEM for a teacher," (Inquirer, 7/13/07) by Reynold Ruth Dingle Jr. I add mine. The sad, yet relative in the Philippines—isn't all if the teachers they're recruiting are mentally stable to face the day-to-day struggle inside the American classroom.

Teachers coming from the Philippines may be on top of their craft, but here in the United States it's a different story. People/boys don't care if you graduated cum laude/your class valedictorian—they look for is how you manage your classroom.

I went through "hell" when I came here as a middle school math teacher in 1996. The first year (as the first two years) is the most crucial because it's like being thrown into a lion's den. I am fortunate enough to establish a good working relationship with my fellow teachers. They looked after me even in the point of inviting inside the classroom to give me a few extra lessons to handle difficult students.

Don't be afraid to talk to your co-workers (with or without an accent—don't understand). Family members can also really help you. If you need someone to talk to at the end of the day A support group in the room, meaning is important, too, because you need to move around during workmeals. Parents or get-togethers on weekends take away some worries even if only for a day.

Family friends, co-teachers and lots of prayers helped me survive my first year in the United States.

—EDGARDO SACDALAN,
Hagonoy@dallasisd.org

Hubby denies he's wife-beater, unfaithful

I WRITE ON BEHALF OF MY CLIENT, Cecil Morella, in connection with Rina Jimenez-Cornejo's July 18 article titled "The innocent pain." The column was written in the allegations made against Morella by his estranged wife, Cecilia "Bren" Quiambao.

My client categorically denies having been ever violent toward Quiambao during—and even after—the almost two decades they were together. He also denies that he was unfaithful to Quiambao during the entire duration of their marriage, and we strongly object to her description of him as a "monster" in their children's eyes.

Morella is fast coming to the end of his rope in trying to protect his children from lies, promised on her one of utter personality and absolute falsity that Quiambao is resorting to extreme charges. Quiambao has unreasonably threatened to institute against him for some time now, but which she has yet to actually file.

At the same season, my client was not contacted for his side on the matter prior to the publication of Bren's column, despite knowledge that he can be reached through "a major news agency" in the interest of fairness. If not the truth, I ask that this letter be given the same possible time.

—B. ANDRÉS A. SALVADOR,
counsel for Cecil Morella,
myles_salvador@yahoo.com

How about Musa Dimasidsing? What now?

WITH THE EXCLUSION OF THE MAguindanao town from the autonomy zone, what will become of the municipios of Mitan Shrinkdrug?

Miguel Zubiri has the gall to call him self a senator when he has only Cotabato Chair Benjamin Mateo and Lanang Salalon—not the majority of the people and not even Cloti—to thank for his "victory."

—DENNIS GARCES,
88 Cadena de Amor St.,
Fendia, Makati City

CTPL business too big for GSIS

THIS REFERS TO THE NEWS ITEM "GSIS willing to defend its insurance plans in court." (Inquirer, 7/20/07) I strongly oppose the plan to give to the Government Service Insurance System the CTPL (Compulsory Third-Party Liability) business for the following reasons:

1. It monopolizes, as a matter of economics, means bad service for those who should get the policy. Moreover, the GSIS can never match the speed of private businesses in issuing policies and paying claims. Private enterprise is always faster than public service.

2. The price of premiums, once it's a monopoly, will go up and no one can do anything about it. Such is the nature of a monopoly. They cannot be blamed.

3. When one registers his car, one would like to have a quick response to attend to his affairs. I can already imagine the long lines in the "CTPL pay-out" area only the GSIS is providing the service. One can expect the usual poor service, long lunch breaks and grumpy staff always associated with government service.

4. The GSIS, in the late CTPL premium, will exclusively handle investments of claims. The system cannot handle the volume, and this will result in long lines and poor service for the claimants. It's time that there be free competition in this industry.

I agree that fraud should be stopped in the CTPL business by enforcing the existing laws and requiring the Insurance Commission to stop "fly by night" CTPL insurance firms. However, the owners, employed, such as making the GSIS the sole provider of CTPL insurance, is ineffective and counterproductive.

—ARIEL DE VEGA,
rydevega@yahoo.com

Atenco challenged to show patriotism

[illegible] IT IS NOT EASY TO MAKE scholastic Beth Gobi' optimism in our national team's chances of winning the Fifth Asia Tournament (July 28-Aug. 1) in Yokohama, Japan, which we need to secure a slot in the 2008 Beijing Olympics, or at least in the semis the Chinese win the tournament, the Philippines ranking up as runner-up—China, an Olympics host, is seeded in the Games, hence, the Nationals get a ticket to the Olympics.

After winning the just-concluded Smart A. Series—Manila International Championships and playing third in the 20th Jones Cup in Taipei, the Philippine quintet, last this month, starts its mission of securing a ticket to join the Olympics after 33 years. The coach's coach is Chot Reyes, undeniably one of the nation's best mentors. Only assisting him is Tim Cone/Cole coach Bobby Parks, Noli Rocete, Bong Castro and even Ramon[illegible] Gordon coach Joseph Uichico. Coach Tim Cone reportedly will join the staff after the PBA Fiesta Conference finals.

Unfortunately, Ateneo Blue Eagles coach Norman Black, reportedly, will not be able to join the bench in Yokohama because of commitments in the UAAP.

Reyes described Uichico, Cone and Black—all former national coaches—the "In-

Sans penalty for torture, HSA a graver threat

THE HUMAN SECURITY ACT OF 2007 (HSA) has rightly been criticized as a serious threat to basic human rights—a threat designed as a measure to combat terrorism. While banning terror, it is unlikely to prevent, and may in fact facilitate, torture.

First, despite the HSA's explicit ban on torture, the fact is, torture has yet to be made a criminal offense in the Philippine penal system; victims are unable to prosecute its perpetrators, thus rendering the ban manifestedly in practice.

Second, in countries where perpetrators of torture enjoy impunity—which unfortunately includes the Philippines—detention facilities often become conducive to torture when suspects are tortured under the guise of interrogation, whether or not torture is banned.

Third, the HSA's provision on "extraordinary restitution" is shocking. Though outlawing the detention in principle, the law does permit detention of terror suspects "needed for terror or related police investigations" overuse or abuse of this provision by police officers can lead to rampant violations of human rights.

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INQUIRER Southern Luzon

NILA'S STORY

Surviving life's trials through faith

She believes that by sharing graces to the needy, God will also be more gracious to her and her family

By Romulo Pante
San Pedro, Laguna

NILA TRIBIANA AQUINO AND her husband Bert would have wanted themselves preoccupied with supporting two beautiful daughters, who are now a medical doctor and a hotel and restaurant management graduate.

But on August 27, 1987, Nila gave birth to a child (daughter whose looks came as a shock to her and the family Anna Carmela had no hands and legs.

"She was born an angel, one with broken wings," she recalls, near-tears, from San Pedro, Laguna, and of the quadriplegic Anna Carmela.

Indeed, an angel Anna Carmela is. Despite her handicap, she has become a source of inspiration and pride in her family and in her elementary and high school classmates because of her intelligence, wit and deep love of God.

Excelling in science and English, she had been a consistent honor student, graduating valedictorian in the elementary and salutatorian in high school. She wants to pursue studies in psychology in a years' time eventually.

No punishment

A years she never when she was in first year high school did not believe her being a quadriplegic. It empowered her thanks to God for "the beautiful and healthy body. For my eyes to see the colorful flowers, the beautiful birds, and the sky..."

Indeed, contrary to what Nila had thought that her child was a curse and punishment, she is a gem and heaven-sent.

Her cousin Ofe A. Tribiana, in her essay "Everyday Miracles," describes Nila's ordeal: "Hope and denial consumed her for days and weeks. Alone in her room, she would cry question why she allowed this to happen when she had served Him well, done good some more. She could not even bring herself to talk about, much less atone, her baby to her friends."

The mother's depression went on for about two months, until she could cry no more. She turned to the Bible for answers, and realized how her life resembled that of Job, whose faith and fidelity to God was tested. All her anger and feeling of shame disappeared.

Answered prayers

The whole family finished Anna Carmela with all the affections and care she needed like a normal baby. She is prone to all family gatherings and celebrations. She entertains guests with her favorite Pinoy-ne Gello and MYMP songs.

Today, the teenager likes to send text messages in her two mobile phones to friends despite her short, incomplete and twisted fingers.

Nila recalled how God had answered her prayers when Anna Carmela was 2 years old. She appealed that the child's navel be free of fluid whenever she was brought to the hospital to Manila in a custom-made stroller for regular checkups.

On July 7, 1989, while Nila was preparing for a visit to a seminar in Cebu for her company's budget supervisor, a silent "voice" told her in Filipino: "Yan pinlgod P1,000, but you will only pay for P100. Iyo ito mare."

Despite a long journey short, Nila had bought the lucky number which won the grand prize of a raffle draw on July 9, 1989, by the local chapter of the Knights of Columbus in San Pedro—a new Zebra AZV. It was a perfect answer to Anna Carmela's need for transportation in the hospital.

In the years went on, the mother realized that her time and efforts were not sufficient to look after the daily needs of Anna Carmela. Bert had to resign from his work abroad and help look after the child.

Second trial: cancer

Now 19, Anna Carmela said she wanted people in "train me as a normal person like them. I don't want them to pity me because I am like this." She a challenging the children in her neighborhood to solve their studies and complete their projects.

"I am thanking God that He makes me happy despite my physical handicap."

In fine, Nila and Bert thought that the coming of Anna Carmela was their worst trial. "Not yet?" God seemed to say.

Nila was diagnosed as having an advanced stage of breast cancer in the late 1990s. She was advised to undergo chemotherapy and surgery, which, according to her doctors, would give her a 10-50 chance of survival.

Nila knew too well the bleak scenario ahead if she allowed herself to be treated or cure: her older daughters—Marlene and Sharlie—would be forced to quit college, and she herself would stop working.

She decided to keep her condition a secret and continued with her job to allow her children to finish their studies. Her only request to God was to contain the cancerous cells so that she would not suffer much.

In 2000, her left nipple started to retract. In February 2005, her breast bled and boil, accompanied by wound. Several tests did not rule out metastasis.

In early 2006, back pains prompted her to have a bone scan. The doctor's prognosis: Stage-4 cancer.

Time for treatment

This time, her family protested.

Marlene, who finished TEA in the February 2006 Pharmacist Board Examinations, and is also a licensed physician, made Nila promise that no matter what happened, her mother must go through the required medical treatment.

The eldest child chose to defer her own desires to attend to her mother's needs. Her eldest sister Sharlie, who is now working in a leading hotel, are all behind Nila. Anna Carmela has expressed willingness to delay her schooling.

Nila is currently back in her job in a transportation services company, and her medication continues. Her late salary has been restituted, and her family is savoring its advances and loans from her company and assistance from people who care.

Like Job, her strong faith has sustained her in her fight against the malady. She has remained smiling, assured that God, with the help of countless agents scanning the heavens with prayers and adoration, will see her.

Tithing continues

Despite her financial crisis, the pastor keeps her practice of tithing to the Church, charitable institutions, and to the poor. She believes that by sharing graces to the needy, God will also be more gracious to her and her family.

"I keep praying that God will still save me so that I can continue earning for my children," Nila said. "But I don't know what He plans is. Whatever it is, I know it will be for the best. I have complete trust in my True Healer."

Abbot Carmela Tribiana Aquino, 19, a quadriplegic, is a source of pride to her family and friends. INQUIRER PHOTO

Korean churches build homes for supertyphoon survivors

The undertaking was borne out of gratitude to the Filipinos for their help during the Korean War in the early 1950s

By Ephraim Agcolor
Legazpi City

PRESBYTERIAN CHURches in Korea are raising funds to build 200 houses for displaced typhoon survivors in Legazpi City's coastal villages.

The 24-square-meter concrete houses, worth P70,000 each, are to be built on a relocation site in Barangay Tanora. With galvanized iron roofs, they are expected to withstand 320-kilometer per-hour winds.

The Korean housing project is done in partnership with the Philippine Council of Evangelical Churches.

Twelve Korean pastors visited the Philippines on July 17 to attend the groundbreaking ceremonies in Tanora, a hilly village in the city where typhoon survivors are temporarily housed.

Rev. Sun Yeol Park, pastor of the Sol Mot Presbyterian Church and board chair of the Incheon Hills Institute, said the undertaking was borne out of gratitude to the Filipinos for their help during the Korean War in the early 1950s.

On Sept. 15, 1950, about 7,000 soldiers of the Philippine Expeditionary force to Korea reached the South Korean port city of Pusan. About 400 Filipino soldiers died during that war that lasted almost six years.

"This is a good opportunity to help the Filipinos in time of need just as they helped us during the Korean War. We pray for more blessings for the people living at the relocation sites through this project and also for their spiritual well-being," Park said.

Bishop Efraim Tendero, national director of the Philippine Council of Evangelical Church-

es, said other movement the Koreans to continue extending help to Bicol was their love of Christ.

"We want to restore the dignity of calamity-stricken people and what better way to start that than by helping them have a home," Tendero said.

'Sweat equity'

"This is not a dole-out because the beneficiaries have their sweat equity," he clarified. "They have to help in building the houses."

The beneficiaries were chosen based on the criteria of the Department of Social Welfare and Development.

Aside from the houses, the Koreans will fund livelihood projects such as the "SARI-SARI store." PATH stands for "Food always in the home."

"We will provide them training and technology on the production of good vegetable crops and help them don't some vital infrastructures that would be helpful to them," Tendero added.

Some Korean Christians are also interested in putting up educational facilities in relocation sites in remote areas.

"We are continuously raising funds for our projects. This is just the start. And we want to see more people, more churches to participate in the rehabilitation efforts in Albay," said Tendero.

Legazpi Mayor Noel Rosal said the 1,000 houses pledged by different organizations, including the 200 houses donated by the Korean churches, would benefit people living in seven coastal villages and Mayon's danger zones.

He said 2,000 houses were immediately needed for people who would be relocated from the danger zones at the southeast access of the volcano.

A FAMILY in the coastal village of Bayhay in Legazpi City lives in a makeshift house with only a tarpaulin for a roof. INQUIRER PHOTO

Across the NATION
Assistant Editor Tony Bergonia

MILF asks donors to help stop war

COTABATO CITY—THE MORO ISLAMIC LIBERATION Front has sought the help of donor countries to pressure the Philippine military into reversing a plan to launch offensives in MILF territories to avenge the deaths of 14 Marines in a clash on Basilan Island.

Mohagher Iqbal, MILF chief negotiator and Murad Ebrahim, MILF chief, has informed ambassadors of the United States, Canada and Japan of the administration of a military offensive in Basilan or similar peace talks between the guerrillas and the Philippine government.

Iqbal said the MILF has agreements with agencies from these countries that are implementing reconciliation projects in Mindanao.

Iqbal said Murad's July 22 letter, which was also sent to other foreign ambassadors with aid programs in war-torn areas of Mindanao, is a reminder to them of the "unwanted effects" of a clash between the military offensive.

"Once the military is roped in Basilan or elsewhere in Mindanao, a chain reaction is likely to happen. . . God forbid," Iqbal quoted Murad as saying.

The military said the offensive was to smoke out the MILF so as to punish those responsible for the July 11 ambush in Albudin, Basilan, where 14 Marines were killed.

At least 18 of the dead soldiers had been beheaded.

The MILF admitted its participation but denied that it had beheaded the Marines.

Iqbal said Murad called for a speedy resolution of the conflict because it "is important to the interest of foreign donor countries."

"But, Al Haj, chief of the MILF committee on peace, could send earlier reports that MILF forces have been mopping up, including those in Maguindanao and Shariff Aguak," Iqbal said.

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MEMBERS of the Marine contingent in the Presidential Security Group prepare for deployment to Basilan. President Macapagal-Arroyo ordered the Marine contingent in the PSG to take part in offensives to punish Moro guerrillas behind the killing of 14 Marines. Ten of the Marines had been beheaded.

Boxing champ returns a hero to residents of Bohol town

By Jaime R. Bulanon
Inquirer Visayas

TALIBON, BOHOL—BOXING champion Nestor Donaire Jr. who grew up in the United States but who has ties to Talibon town, was honored with a hero's welcome on his return to the hometown yesterday.

The 24-year-old Donaire won both the International Boxing Federation and International Boxing Organization light flyweight boxing titles at a second bout in Las Vegas against Vic Darchinyan knocking his opponent out in the fifth round.

Residents of Talibon residents showered where Donaire made a victorious call to Talibon Mayor Antonio Jose and went to a fiesta.

More people greeted him during the motorcade, some wearing banners and placards, and hailing him as a homecomer here.

He made us feel so proud. He put Bohol and Talibon on the map. We consider him as a hero who brought pride to the Filipino people," Jose said.

Donaire's maternal roots are from Barangay Inan Ave., Talibon. He left Talibon, a few days months, partly into the Tagbilaran City, in 1990 at three years old when his family migrated to California.

Donaire said, in an interview, that he was grateful for the good welcome saying he was inspired to fight to give fame to Filipinos in the country.

He said he went to the Lady of Grace Church in his hometown in California to ask for blessing a week before his fight.

"I knew I'm destined to win because I prayed to Him and to God. I have prepared for the fight and I knew I could do it," said Donaire.

Donaire said it was his mother and grandfather Francisco Gonzales, now 94 years old, who inspired him to become boxer.

Jolo Donaire was among the many relatives who greeted Donaire along with his uncle Sen. Pi Medina Honasan, governor Edgar Chatto of Bohol, Donaire is a black sheet bowing to the governor, governor's entourage Lolo Donaire got emotional as when he finally met Donaire.

Lolo Francisco said he missed his grandson whom he described as very obedient.

It was so good that he had one Donaire whom "still in Talibon yesterday was the first since he went his championship.

Donaire's father, Nestor Sr., who came home with his son, said his son would leave for the United States in August where he would not be a month before returning his training for his title defense in December.

The elder Donaire said he had longed for son not to allow his home to go to his head. "I have been telling him to stay humble and not let his fame sink him. He has always been a good child and we're so proud of him," he said.

15 Pampanga mayors fly to HK, Macau to 'bond'

By Tonette Orejas
Inquirer Central Luzon

CITY OF SAN FERNANDO—At least 15 of 11 mayors in Pampanga will be flying out to Hong Kong and Macau on Wednesday, travel orders obtained by the Inquirer from capitol sources showed.

But of the mayors who booked flights for the trip said the purpose of the visit was for "bonding."

"We were really hard hit by Seng. It's been all week. We planned to take time out together and relax. We need it to prepare pushed through. We schedule it now because we won't have time again when floods come around," said the official, who did not want to be named. He was the only independent from the league.

One of the mayors confirmed they left on an 8 a.m. flight via Philippine Airlines but said they decided of a bigger tour package.

In the travel orders approved by Gov. Eddie Panlilio at various dates since July 20, the mayors said their trip was "personal" and that "no government funds" would be incurred by them.

Travel orders

Panlilio said he approved the mayors because the mayors "have the right to travel."

The secretary of the Pampanga Mayors' League, Nicky Bituin, joined the local executives in their trip, that came on the eve of the month of their scheduled regional meeting.

The officials who got permission to travel abroad were Mayors Edgardo Flores of Mexico, Nilo Velasco of Bacolor, Bobby Timpuyo of Sasmuan, Yolanda Pineda of San Rita, Amy Weiss of Candaba, Lydia Gonzalez of Magalang, Rodolfo Rivera of Guagua, Edgar Epuya Jr. of Lubao, Jonathan Sagsal, Rio Tuzon, Elenito Ebreo, Mahalaxmi Luis Fuentes, Arnold Dennis Pineda, Lolino Henson, Edwin Gallegos, Agustin and Peter Nuñez, Macapagal. Susan Lisa Chief refused to talk to reporters by telephone.

IN THE KNOW

SCHEDULES IN HONG KONG, MACAU

The following mayors of Pampanga are now in Hong Kong and Macau for "bonding" as they travel abroad—Edgardo Flores of Mexico; Nicky Bituin, Sasmuan; Bobby Timpuyo, Bacolor; Yolanda Pineda, San Rita; Amy Weiss, Candaba; Lydia Gonzalez, Magalang; Rodolfo Rivera, Guagua; Edgar Epuya, Lubao; Jonathan Sagsal, Rio Tuzon; Elenito Ebreo, Mahalaxmi Luis Fuentes, Arnold Dennis Pineda, Lolino Henson, Edwin Gallegos, Agustin and Peter Nuñez, Macapagal. Susan Lisa Chief refused to talk to reporters by telephone.

Sponsorship

Before the May 7, 2007 elections, alliances of 38 departments headed by the mayor of town in the former British colony supposedly on the sponsorship of former Gov. Mark Lapid. He had denied paying for the fare and shopping money.

Board members also time left for Hong Kong for a three-day vacation.

On the return trip of the mayors, the business received all food. Five held messages expressing prayers over the trip.

On top of their monthly salaries of no less than P35,000, most mayors in Pampanga rose income and incomes, commissions or rackets.

On Aug. 9, 12 provincial board members are due to leave for a three-day trip to Hong Kong. Capitol sources said the trip was among to be sponsored by a Pampanga congressman.

Travel orders

Some of the mayors brought along their wives, it was also learned.

Before departing, one of the mayors sent a text message to the Inquirer saying that he and his crew "spent their own money for the trip."

It was the first step of thinking that a third party, a top politician, had shouldered the cost of the vacation.

Those who did not join the trip were Mayor Bonnie Bautista Concepcion of this Aeta, Angeles Ingusan of San Luis, Dario Rodriguez of Del Gallo, Jose Bocanegra, Fernando Flamenco of Guagua, Roger Santos of Porac and Edgardo Dominico of Floridablanca.

This was the first time that the current crop of Pampanga mayors went on a foreign trip together, it was learned.

Hong Kong guests have become popular among capitol officials.

IBP team sets environmental audit of Iloilo villages

By David Israel Sinay
Inquirer Visayas

ILOILO CITY—THE NATIONAL Environmental Action Team (Neat) of the Integrated Bar of the Philippines (IBP) will conduct its environmental compliance audit of IBO homeowners' association (HOA) complexes with Republic Act No. 9003, the Ecological Solid Waste Management Act of 2000.

The audit will be done because "barangay captains have not taken the law seriously," said lawyer Antonio Quino Jr., IBP-NEAT chief, in a letter to Mayor Jerry Treñas.

"To insulate the team from any political pressure influence, it will be strictly composed of professionals. While we may ask one of your officials to join us, we are only to serve as guide, he/she will not participate in any deliberations," Quino said. Treñas in a letter dated July 13.

Treñas said he welcomed the initiative of the IBP-NEAT for an environmental audit.

According to the Office of Public Services (OPS), the city has officials failed to rally their constituents to practice proper waste disposal. Only 72 of the 180 villages in the city have functional materials recovery facilities (MRF).

OPS chief Raul Tadlo said only 40 percent of the city's barangays were practicing proper waste disposal through MRFs.

The OPS is in charge of garbage regulation. It has levied 8000 ordinances to the village officials for improper disposal of wastes as biodegradable, non-biodegradable and recyclable materials.

Quino said Ms Heal, a non-government organization that was working with the IBP-NEAT, has conducted seminars and training to educate village officials on proper waste disposal.

"In the event that no final gains and immutable negligence on the part of the barangay officials, we will endorse the matter to the Office of the Ombudsman for appropriate action," Quino said.

"We will have their names and pictures published in the local and national media to make them examples of non-performing members of the Philippine government," he said.

"It is time to hold accountable the people whose salaries are pay."

GMA arch-critic says Sona sign of 'ominous things'

BAGUIO CITY—LINGAYEN-Dagupan Archbishop Oscar Cruz said President Macapagal-Arroyo's state of the Nation Address took the country to "wonderland and beyond," but warned about "ominous things to come."

In an interview on Wednesday and a statement posted in his blog (www.oscarcruz.blogspot.com) on Tuesday, Cruz said those scenarios were the possibility of Mr. Arroyo running for office again in 2010, more taxes, bigger loans and Charter change.

Cruz, a staunch critic of the Arroyo administration, said those statements should have sent what he described as "negativity and ineptitude" but they be caught unprepared.

"The State's opening salvo that the Philippines will be a first world country in 2020. It is a regular trend (of) [which] we're [in] for [a] long," he said in his blog entry.

"There are so many projects to think and to start. There are so many plans to accomplish, so many programs to [complete]. All these cannot be done in three years (up to 2010). If they were not achieved before, in some 63 long years since 2001, how could they be done in only three years from 2007?" Cruz asked.

"The kinds all these projects, the 'feel pressure' and 'feel progressive' will swell more years in office, he said.

"Otherwise, the first world is maybe the country would be just that—a pipeline vision. The only option is obvious: If you are a job when someone supported and expected to end governing by 2010, is in that poised to join again for another effort, another mission?"

Cruz said people should be worried against Mr. Arroyo's implicit and avowed plan for the Senate and House of Representatives to reform in the 2nd law.

He said it was "idiotic" to propose that the amendment would lead to lower interest or indirectly.

"The assumption, that is exactly such, is that sometime soon, taxes will be so low that it could be very, very, all interest, consumption, etc," he said.

He said the airports and roads to be built, infrastructure to be put up and development projects that Mr. Arroyo mentioned in her State "sound a lot of money."

"In fact, even pointing—protecting or defending—the Metro-Luzon ecosystem is becoming more and more expensive. Who is surprised to pay for all these? Who else but the taxpayers?" he said.

Cruz said Red despite Mr. Arroyo's call for the people to respect politics at the State was far from spotless.

"Together with all conceivable signals in Luzon, the Visayas and Mindanao many incumbent politicos bury all over the land were meticulously assured—with proper admonition and gratitude—together with the appliance for their self-esteem," he said.

"The State brought us to overdrawn and beyond. But alternately, into a brought back to the real national realities—not less killings, abductions and corruption, endemic lying, cheating and stealing, poverty, hunger and sickness . . . brought about by none other than the current set of don minds Philippines," Cruz said. Indirectly, Nobela Pearson, the quote Northern Luzon

POLICEMEN take a rest near Malacañang Palace while waiting for action during State duty.

Water, power shortage; prepare for worst

From page A1

Jesus Dureza, Undersecretary Secretary Raul said the country's weather had "flipped." Luzon and the Visayas, which should be "very wet," are now in "very dry," while Mindanao is "very wet" when it should be dry by mid.

President reports, who briefed his Agriculture after she addressed the "National Multistakeholder Conference on Disaster Reduction" in Malolos, said Metro Manila and some parts of the country would be hit by drought by September.

A drought is declared when an area experiences a dry spell for three consecutive months.

Raoul said the Hydroelectric plant in Caliraya, Laguna, of National Power Corp. (Napocor) was not working anymore because of the low water level in the lake.

Manual load dropping

"The rains are not coming in as expected, causing low inflows of water into the dams that provide fuel to hydropower plants such as Angat, Ringit, Pantabangan, Ambuklao and Binga," Shaneen said in a statement.

Napocor said it implemented a procedure called "manual load dropping" (MLD) at 10:40 a.m. because the electricity being generated was not enough, especially those from hydroelectric power plants.

The state-owned company, which supplies electricity to distributors, said MLD is initiated due to the rolling brownouts.

Supply less than demand

Siva Lorenzo, Meralco senior public relations officer, said the brownouts affected other areas of the Meralco franchise, like Bulacan, Batangas and Laguna.

"Electricity supply is less than demand, but we hope the situation is just temporary," Lorenzo said.

"We advise household members to stop using all appliances once brownouts hit their areas," Emporio said. "They should be plugged back a few minutes after power has been restored."

Coal supply, maintenance

A lack of coal to power the coal-fed plants of independent power producers (IPPs) has also contributed to the sharp decline in the supply of electricity.

Magnaye said the insufficient power supply was also due to some power plants undergoing maintenance.

The Meralco-owned Team Energy which fuels the coal-fired plants in Sual, Pangasinan, had shut down half of its 600-megawatt plant since July 20 because it had not received coal from government suppliers.

The government shipped coal to the Sual plant on Wednesday afternoon but its generators were only producing up to 400-300 of electricity, according to a plant official.

The Government-owned coal in the Sual plants, and hydroelectric in the Ilihan plant and the Malaya thermal plant in Southern Luzon, and the Limay plant in Bataan, according to Gerardo Wenceslao, general manager of Benguet Electric Cooperative (Benecop).

He said this resulted in a 100-MW deficit.

Cloud seeding

The Sual plant breakdown affected Region I's southern sections as early as 7 a.m. The breakdown also affected eastern Pangasinan.

At the request of Napocor and the Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System, the Bureau of Water and Soils Management has started conducting cloud seeding over Central Luzon, according to the weather bureau.

JAMS WATER CALL: Water delivery like this one in Caloocan City may not come as frequently as needed. Drought threatens the National Capital Region, Regions I and 3 and parts of Luzon after August. EDGAR

If the low volume of rainfall persists, Central Luzon would be hit by drought, according to the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (Pagasa).

"If this persists for another month, there will be drought in those areas," said Flaviana D. Hilario, head of Pagasa's climatology and agrometeorology division.

From June to July, a "below-than-normal" rainfall prevailed over the entire Central Luzon, except for Aurora province.

A low volume of rainfall, and low water level in Angat Dam, would affect the water supply in Metro Manila and irrigations, and take its toll on "rice-bowl-a-ripe" in Central Luzon, and some areas in Region II, Hilario said.

Still summer in Luzon

With a Pressurehour presentation, Hilario said it should be rainy season in Luzon but usually images showed that it was "still summer."

Normal said rainfall levels in Metro Manila from June to July were "below normal"—20 to 40 percent compared with the normal range of 80 to 120 percent.

In simpler terms, Normal said that Metro Manila had been experiencing a dry spell for the past two months. The "prognosis" for August is not good, he said.

Normal said the dry spell was also being felt in Regions I (Ilocos) and II (Cagayan Valley).

Global

Ms Arroyo told reporters that the country was not alone in experiencing the kind of "weather disturbances."

"We remember countries in Europe, parts in the rest of the world," Ms Arroyo said.

Normal noted that England was experiencing severe flooding while mainland Europe was suffering from a heat wave that has killed many people. At the same time, parts of Indonesia and India are experiencing droughts.

Urban fire, red tide

Should a drought hit Metro Manila and Region I, red tide could erupt in Manila Bay and Lingayen Gulf, according to Normal.

The drought would affect the agricultural sector, power and water supplies and could result in urban fires, he said, citing some areas in the metropolis.

"The good thing is that the national government, through the National Disaster Coordinating Council (NDCC), is on top of the situation," Normal said.

Water rationing

He said Metro Manila was experiencing rains in the afternoons (recently) because of cloud-seeding operations.

If things will go bad, we will go to water supply distribution," Normal said.

The NDCC and the Department of Science and Technology have already recommended the repair of dikes "just to make sure the flow of water will be unimpeded," Normal said.

The long term measures include the rehabilitation of dams and forests that are being facilitated, he said.

Info campaign

"In terms of the demand side, that is something that our people should be educated on by talking on conservation," Normal said.

Ms Arroyo reminded the agencies to launch an information and awareness program for water conservation. With reports from Tina Arcalas, Christine Avendaño and Nikko Dizon, Inquirer Northern Luzon

Save La Mesa groups: Polluting dam is terrorism

From page A1

will pollute water supply and poison millions of Filipinos.

In a phone interview yesterday, Madrigal said the petition for contempt remaining under award" he filed next week against the Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System (MWSS) in order to compel it to proceed with the bidding project in another location.

"We are filing this petition to oppose any kind of construction within the watershed. This is preventive," said Madrigal, adding that if the administration of President Macapagal-Arroyo allowed this she would be "killing more people than the law" were did.

She said the bursting project was in danger of poisoning the La Mesa watershed where supplies water to about 12 million people.

It's the law

"Some law enforcement will say it: If you clinker with the act, you will be in violation. So, which the worse one?" Madrigal added.

Madrigal's petition will be supported by some the million organizations in a campaign to ban the bursting project, launched by the time the La Mesa Coalition last year.

Activists and others say the planned construction project unlawful again after President Arroyo made a statement on July 20 that the La Mesa watershed is a "protected watershed subject to private rights."

The statement, which has been interpreted as a show of support by the construction project, has alarmed environmentalists.

Hypocritical

"We feel that the statement is hypocritical. If she says one thing then she should follow through. What she said was that the La Mesa watershed should be protected and then in the same breath, she announced that construction," said ABS-CBN Foundation managing director Gina Lopez.

The foundation's environmental arm, Bantay Kalikasan, is part of the lawsuit the La Mesa Coalition.

Lopez said that Ms Arroyo should have just refrained from making any statements for the protection of the La Mesa watershed if she was not prepared to thoroughly support it.

"We feel the highest office in

LESSONS FROM SL CONE: La Mesa Dam is a protected watershed and should stay protected. EDGAR

the land should be safeguarding our rights in a clean water and a protected environment. But here, she is saying in essence that the majority is subservient to private interests," Lopez said.

She said she spoke to the Watchdog once the phone to clarify her statement and that Ms Arroyo said that she recognized the leasing project in the La Mesa since the end of the lease was done legally.

She however noted that the project could be done without any danger of pollution since there are already available technology which could mitigate it, said Lopez.

No ways to mitigate pollution

Lopez, however, said that studies in the area showed that there were no ways to mitigate groundwater contamination.

Some 56 farmers of the La Mesa watershed area are being sued as a location for a leasing project for 1,421 MWSS employees under a collective bargaining agreement with the MWSS management.

Bantay Kalikasan's opposition to the project sued as basis a study conducted by Dr. Leonardo Lesaganon of the University of the Philippines-National Institute of Biological Center (UP-NIBC).

"I will be in the best interest of MWSS and the general public when eventually settle for drinking the water in the La Mesa Reservoir than the 58 hectares of the La Mesa watershed area being prepared for the MWSS-backing project and that remain a protected watershed area and not be converted as a housing project area," Lesaganon said.

Law regard for environment

The President's proclamation of the La Mesa watershed as a protected watershed "subject to private rights," and her appointment of ex-Manila Mayor Lito Atienza as the new environment secretary showed that "law was made for the environment," said Ileana Ines Reyes, executive director of the Environmental Studies Institute of Miriam College.

Ms Arroyo's passing mention of the watershed as a site for Monday's feast of the Santo Niño Church, specifically her declaration of national public, only bolstered this perception, Reyes told a gathering of environmentalists yesterday.

"The focus failed to address pressing major environmental concerns raised by a multitude of non-government organizations, people's organizations and the Church," she said. With a report from TJ Burgonio

Rookie solons awed, shocked by elders' behavior

From page A1

first, solons legitimacy they were questioning. The din was compounded by shouts and jeers from a partisan gallery.

"We are supposed to be honorable congressmen," Bataan Rep. Glenn Chong told the heavens, evoking an expression that House members computed themselves less than honorable during the proceedings that had been described as "chaotic."

"I have not experienced something similar first-normal, tell our colleague beside her. Nenet Daza supposed to teach us how to [illegible]," said Chong, a member of the Liberal Party.

Chong, 34, succeed the post of Bataan representative beat old hand Gerardo Espina in the midterm elections. One the Espina dynasty in the province appoint issues, in other members hearing sought and won other elective posts.

"There are more than 100 first-termers here. What are we watching there?" Sen. Juan Ponce Enrile Zamora told reporters at the sidelines.

Of at least 238 first-termers in the House, 80 or so are newbies. The rest are lawmakers returning to their old posts after the obligatory break from serving three consecutive terms.

The House membership has yet to be finalized, with certain members the supreme court and awaiting proclamation by the Commission on Elections.

'Mr. Presiding Officer!'

Rep. Jocelyn "Cito" Bag. Antonio Pano, whose post-war vote was held by his elder brother, interior Secretary Ronaldo Puno, said its area "a little bit surprised" but was "not complicated."

Pano, however, surely that it was going to happen, but I was surprised by the intensity of those who were competing," he said.

The lawmakers were perpetrating to finally elect a Speaker after several months of fierce maneuvering between Pangasinan Rep. Jose de Venecia and his challenger, Cebu Rep. Pablo Garcia.

He said as House Secretary General Roberto Nazareno attempted to read the various manifestations of the opposition said of the first cacophonous and filled the plenary with shouts of "Mr. Presiding Officer!" Mr. Presiding Officer!"—practically to question his serving as such.

Nazareno, known to be close to De Venecia, as well as the opposition said the tactic campaign had annoyed someone else in presidential conscience that in presidential conscience that in presidential conscience that

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Aplus METRO
Editor Rose G. Cipriano

DID YOU KNOW

9-KILL were stolen in 2006 in the country, according to Land Transportation Office records. Motor Manila registered the biggest number of new bikes with over 200,000, or about 17 percent of the total. On the other hand, only about 9,000 bikers were born in the Caraga region that year.

(Left) Shoplifters, liquefier (Tabasco)

Bunye kin survives ambush in Munti

Probers eye illegal vendors' eviction as motive

By Julie M. Aurelio

THE MUNTINLUPA CITY POLICE yesterday tightened the security around Mayor Aldrin San Pedro after armed men tried to kill one of his relatives the other night.

City Administrator Rodrigo Bunye, the nephew of Francisco Tatay Ignacio Bunye, was shot by three men as he was driving his vehicle at 8:45 p.m. Tuesday in Barangay Putatan, the shootout in the municipality.

Supt. Alfredo Valdez, Muntinlupa police chief, said he ordered stricter security measures to be implemented at City Hall and assigned seven police escorts to Bunye.

"I have assigned two plain clothes policemen and two SWAT members there. We have to take extra care," Valdez told the investigators.

The attack on Bunye was carried out by three unidentified men on board a motorcycle.

According to the police, Bunye was driving his vehicle on Bruger Street in Barangay Putatan when the three men drew up alongside him and fired at the official.

They were able to recover 20 spent shells, a live bullet and a slug from a cal. 45 pistol from the scene of the incident.

SPO2 Roy Quiano said they found bullet holes in the front tires, left fender, left door and window of Bunye's vehicle.

Valdez said they are following up leads on the identities of the suspects.

"We are also looking into the possibility that the shooting operations against illegal vendors and terminals in the Alabang area may have something to do with the attempt on Bunye's life," he added.

Bunye was initially brought to the Medical Center Muntinlupa for treatment and is now recuperating at the Asian Hospital.

"He's out of danger. City Administrator Bunye is now in stable condition," San Pedro said in a phone interview.

I wouldn't like to but also want to talk to prosecutors because all he had been receiving death threats over the past few months. "I have to be more careful. There's more to this incident," San Pedro said in his statement. Florencio Cabaco is temporarily take over Bunye's post as city administrator.

San Pedro also vowed the suspects that the attempt on Bunye's life could have something to do with the clearing operations against illegal structures, terminals and vendors in the Alabang-Zapote area conducted by the Metropolitan Manila Development Authority earlier this month.

"We are just doing our job," he pointed out, referring to the operations dismantling of illegal structures and the eviction of squatters.

FOR WOMEN ONLY
Kikayan, a store on Rizal Avenue in Sta. Cruz, Manila, offers all kinds of accessories for women who want to look nice.

5 injured in 8-vehicle smashup at SLEX

By Julie M. Aurelio

FIVE PERSONS WERE INJURED when an Isuzu van with family tinders crashed into seven other vehicles on the Southern Luzon Expressway yesterday morning.

Rushed to the Asian Hospital in Muntinlupa City for slight injuries were Abraham Salas, 23, of Cavite; Jeric Otoy, 25, of Malabon City; Jennifer Tingalan, 23, and Elizabeth de Leon, 52, of Bacolod City; and Michael Sinoza, 22, of Cavite.

The driver of the van, Joseph Sison, was apprehended by members of the Traffic Management Group in Bicutan, Taguig City. Sison said the van's brakes were malfunctioning.

Last investigator SPO1 Marlon Diaz said the multiple collision occurred at 6:30 a.m. near the boundary of Muntinlupa and Pasanjan exits.

"All the cars were standing still in traffic when the Isuzu Wing Van (RGD 986) driven by Sison plowed into them from behind," Diaz told the investigators.

The van crashed first into a blue Honda Civic (WKY 790), which in turn hit a white Toyota Altis (PSF 741).

The other vehicles involved in the incident were a white Nissan Urvan (DBC 948), a maroon Toyota Tamaraw FX (TBA 862), a blue Hyundai Sonata van (SBC 127), a blue Nissan Frontier and a maroon Nissan Terrano (GJB 998).

Also said the five victims only sustained minor injuries such as bruises and cuts.

Sison will be charged with reckless imprudence resulting in multiple damage to property and multiple slight physical injuries.

4 brothers get life term for death of neighbor in QC

By Margaux C. Ortiz

A QUEZON CITY REGIONAL TRIAL COURT has sentenced four brothers to life imprisonment after finding them guilty of murder and shooting to death a neighbor in Novaliches last year.

Judge Ma. Theresa de la Rosa-Bahay of the Quezon City Regional Trial Court Branch 83 ordered Reynel, Reynato, Danilo and Roy-ong de Leon to pay the family of victim Emilio Evasco P50,000 as indemnity for his death and also order P50,000 in moral damages.

The court recently released that the accused, armed with an improvised handgun, a samurai sword, a lead pipe, and a cal. .38 revolver, attacked Evasco "with an intent to kill" in front of his wife.

Glenda Evasco testified before the court that she and her husband were walking on A. Bonifacio Street in Barangay Sto. Cristo, Novaliches, at around 6 p.m. on March 3, 2000 when the four men attacked the victim.

Evasco later died at the Jose Reyes Memorial Hospital due to "hemorrhagic shock as a result of a gunshot wound of the thorax and abdomen."

Antonio denied he attacked Evasco deliberately saying he merely defended himself after the victim pointed a gun at him.

The brothers also gave alibis: Reynel testified that at the time of the incident, he was talking to a police officer in the barangay Police Station. Danilo said he was with his mother in Project Lower, Quezon City, while Reyong said he was in his brother-in-law's house in Caloocan City.

"Unfortunately, the alibi offered by the three accused was unconvincing[ly] to even a single witness," Bahay said in her decision.

Quoting a previous Supreme Court ruling, Bahay added, "Denial, if unsubstantiated by clear and convincing evidence, is a negative self-serving assertion which deserves no weight in law."

According to the judge, the court could not accept Antonio's plea of self-defense, considering that the number of wounds sustained by Evasco "showed that his act was no longer an act of self-defense but a determined effort to kill" the victim.

A medico-legal report showed that Evasco's body had 18 wounds, including contusions and fractures in the neck, head, abdomen, arms and legs.

Singson son hurt in fight

By Kristine L. Alave

THE SON OF FORMER SUCDEN Sor Gen Luis "Chavit" Singson took a beating from two students last June in an Internet cafe on Mendiola Avenue, Pasig City on Tuesday afternoon.

In a phone interview, SPO1 Gerardo Tingzon of the Pasig City police, said Randolf Singson, 43, sustained bruises and wounds on his face and body.

Tingzon said the incident occurred after one of the suspects was irked by Singson who was drumming his fingers on top of a divider which separated the computers. Singson, who was waiting for a friend, was leaning on the divider and watching the suspect, identified only as Mr. Choi, who was playing video games.

According to the police, Choi asked Singson to stop drumming his fingers on the divider. This led to a heated exchange between the two men which turned into a fight.

Another man, said to be Choi's friend, allegedly helped him beat up Singson as the latter then left the Internet shop. Singson was taken to the Rizal Medical Center for treatment.

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Beheaders of Marines identified

MT. ARAYAT: Dr. BASILAN town, idly at least two persons who allegedly beheaded and mutilated the dead Marines who were ambushed by Moro rebels and the mass of former Gov. and now Rep. Wahab Akbar.

The culprits are reportedly two henchmen of Abdulla Mayan Kamlon, [illegible] in Akbar's dense associate, according to my sources.

One of them is allegedly a former detainee charged with murder, terrorism and kidnapping.

The men reportedly killed an imam whose death was blamed on the Marines. They supposedly got the inside of being an informer of the Marines, say my sources.

* * *

No amount of money that Cebu Rep. Pablo Garcia reported to be distributed to some of his colleagues got him the position of Speaker.

It was Garcia's enemy against the chairman of Pangasinan Rep. Jose de Venecia.

Garcia was not even nominated by any of the congressmen who became beneficiaries of his "rain of money" as a Lower lawmaker described the alleged mid-term bribing.

The Cebu congressman allegedly distributed P300,000 each to some lawmakers with a promise of P1 million more if he got elected as Speaker.

Now, others did all that money came from?

Some people point to the 81-year-old congressman's son, Winston Garcia, general manager of the Government Service Insurance System (GSIS).

Even if it's not true, the suspicion is there.

After all, where there's smoke there's fire.

It's high time the young Garcia was replaced as chief of the big money-making government-controlled corporation in order to avoid such suspicion in the future.

* * *

The Court of Appeals (CA) recently met en banc to discuss whether or not to recall to Manila all the justices assigned to it to hear cases in Cebu and Cagayan de Oro City.

On Target
Ramon Tulfo

It's time these justices were reassigned to Manila to erase the stigma of corruption attached to the two CA branches.

It is said that some justices in the two CA branches, especially those in Cebu, have been selling their decisions on temporary restraining orders to litigants who can afford to pay the "corruption fee."

My sources in Cebu say that the lawyer-son of a prominent retired magistrate acts as a middleman between some Cebu CA justices and wealthy litigants.

* * *

The Presidential Anti-Smuggling Group (PAGG) is not getting cooperation from some personnel of the Bureau of Customs.

PAGG chief Antonio Villar, who has the rank of undersecretary, wants Customs Commissioner Napoleon Morales to complain about the refusal of some of the BoC's men to give his office assistance.

On July 14, PAGG agents intercepted two container vans coming from the ports that they suspected contained highly-dutiable cargoes that were undervalued.

The PAGG agents sought the help of customs personnel but were allegedly rebuffed.

They were identified as Customs Policemen Jonato de Leon, lawyer Flore Lalicon and Atty. Isabelo Filipinas.

The three men, according to Villar, refused to receive the apprehended vans for safekeeping.

Filipinas, deputy customs police chief, is the son of a broker who handles the importation of highly-taxable luxury cars.

He is also a nephew of a former top customs official.

* * *

My sources at the Bureau of Food and Drugs (BFAD) says the agency is checking on whether the following candies have formaldehyde: Habanero mint, fresh, White Rabbit Strawberry, Tamarind Delicious, Wild Caramel Sweets, Blue Menthol, I Love You, Remember Me, Only You, Let's Have a Date, I'm Sorry and Do You Love Me candies.

The BFAD spokesperson says a local confectionery that imports White Rabbit from China which was found by BFAD to have formalin.

The chemical is used for embalming purposes and is also utilized in making the shelf life of some food.

MetroBriefs

6,000 jobs up for grabs

AROUND 6,000 jobs are up for grabs in the job fair organized by the Malabon City government for residents on July 28 at the Maritime Sports Park in a sheltered center.

Also, the city's Public Information Office said the job fair spearheaded by the Public Employment Service Office is part of Mayor Oliverio Bernardo's "Yes Jobs, Yes Family" program which aims to ensure that at least two members of a family are employed. Fernando said having two members as job jobs in a family guarantees that the entire family's needs will be satisfied. "Those who wish to participate in the job fair must be at least 18 years old and a high school graduate, the PIO said. Representatives from direct hire companies and overseas employment agencies will conduct interviews on site.

Kristine L. Alave

Thanks, but no thanks

Rep. Gilberto Teodoro Jr. of Tarlac's first district is having trouble finding takers for the P4 billion mega-dike project being touted as the solution to the perennial problem of flooding in the Carmonan (Caloocan, Malabon, Navotas) area.

Teodoro, who is chairman of the Department of Public Works and Highways, initially submitted the completion last March, it was revised to improve the flood control and drainage system in the Carmonan area. Tiangco, however, said that the city government now has 11 pumping stations "which has reduced flooding in most areas to 'knee-deep.'"

"It might help but we don't need it as much as we used to," he added, when he began the discussion.

Nancy C. Carvajal

Court asked to appoint guardian for MJ

By Julie M. Aurelio

CITING MINOR DIFFERENCES pointing to signs of their father's alleged mental illness, the children of Mark Jimenez have asked a Tagaig City court to formally designate a guardian to take care and watch over the former Manila congressman.

The children also asked the court to declare Jimenez, a.k.a. Mario Bautista Crespo, as "mentally incompetent and incapacitated."

In their 13-page petition filed Tuesday, Virgilio Crespo and his grandson Bob said they want Atty. Adell Penaranda to be appointed as their father's legal guardian.

Penaranda is Jimenez's first wife, with whom he has seven children: Carol Castañeda, Jimenez's estranged first ex-partner, has filed a petition for a temporary protection order against him.

Crespo described Penaranda, his mother, as "the most balanced of us all" who could take care of Jimenez.

Frank Chavez, Jimenez's lawyer, meanwhile, accused his client's children of being after their father's wealth.

"The grandfather petition... is in reality a devious ploy to derail MJ Jimenez's initiative of his properties. The children want to take over 80% money," Chavez said in a statement.

Crespo, however, clarified that the petition for guardianship is only over Jimenez's person, and does not cover his assets and properties.

The petition is set to be raffled today to a family court in Taguig City.

Crespo added that he and his siblings are not aware of all of Jimenez's properties, emphasizing that the guardianship petition is not a ploy to gain control of his father's wealth.

"Our main emphasis, really, is for our dad to get medical treatment for his conditions. This has been a long time in the making," Jimenez's son said.

The 13-page petition cited 20 instances of the former congressman's alleged "very disturbing behavior" including the 2-month incidents of physical, emotional and mental abuse he allegedly inflicted upon Consuelo, Jimenez's, and his children with his two partners.

Set up task force to probe QC official's slay, says dad

By Margaux C. Orte

A DENSON CITY COUNCILOR yesterday urged the police to create a task force that would thoroughly investigate the murder of barangay Chair Ramon Silao on Monday night.

"Owing to the grisly circumstances behind the death of the barangay captain which is somewhat unrelated and has caused undue distress, tension and confusion among the residents of Barangay Central, Task Force Ramon is called on duty, under this immediate crime," Councilor Edsel Lagman Jr. said in a resolution he filed on Tuesday.

Mastermind

Lagman said the Quezon City government strongly condemns the "barbaric act" and vowed to leave no table unturned in determining the mastermind of the senseless killing.

In her State of the Nation Address, President Macapagal-Arroyo herself mentioned the need to give the toughest punishment to lawless elements, especially those who murder elected public officials," the councilor said.

Aid

He also urged Mayor Bernardo Bolmoster Jr. to grant what's family P50,000 to financial assistance to recognition of his immense contributions to barangay governance.

Long service

"The late barangay captain was one of the longest serving elected public servants of Barangay Central, having served the area for 13 years straight," Lagman said.

Silao, 46, was shot seven times in front of his convenience by a still unidentified assailant.

The incident happened as the barangay captain was parking over the weekly "Ligtas na Barangay" forum last Monday.

It took place at around 7:45 p.m. inside the barangay multipurpose hall at the corner of Quezon Avenue and Agham Road.

Lockouts

The suspect approached Silao and shot him with a .45 cal. pistol while two other men served as lookouts.

The gunman then fled on foot while his companions boarded a passenger jeepney bound for the Quezon City Hall.

Police said they have launched a manhunt for the suspects.

Pay P2M to victims' family, Meralco told

By Leila B. Salaverria

THE COURT OF APPEALS (CA) ordered the Manila Electric Co. (Meralco) to pay over P2 million in damages to the family of two brothers who were electrocuted in 1999.

In its July 19 decision, the court said the power firm failed to act promptly on the complaints filed by Francisco Lopez Jr. that the power lines in his yard were grounded which led to the death of his sons Honorio Jr. and Eduardo.

The decision affirmed the 2000 ruling of the Makati Regional Trial Court which held Meralco liable for the deaths of the brothers.

"The Court is convinced that it was Meralco's failure to promptly carry out the complaints of Lopez that, which brought about the tragic incident which caused the untimely death of the two sons on Aug. 4, 1999," the court ruling said.

Honorio Jr. was electrocuted as he was hanging wet rags and clothes in the backyard, while Eduardo, who rushed to his aid, but also died.

Prior to the incident, due to their want to Meralco office twice to complain about the malfunctions in his electric billing for July 1999. The malfunction was caused by the grounding of the electrical facilities in his house.

Meralco, for its part, contended that the brothers' death was due to their parents' negligence and lack of foresight, considering that one end of the clothesline was tied to a steel bar protruding from an unfinished hollow block fence, and the other to a pole where their electric meter was installed.

But the appellate court said that even if Meralco had sent one of its personnel to check Honorio Jr.'s meter, and the personnel found nothing wrong with it, the action taken by the company on the "reinforced and well-founded complaint" was insufficient.

It founded as "futile" Meralco's argument that it was only supposed to check the electric meter.

CENTRE ON INTEGRATED RURAL DEVELOPMENT FOR ASIA AND THE PACIFIC

VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT

DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSION OF APPLICATION: 20 SEPTEMBER 2007

Position Title	Level (Grade)	Duty Station	Duration of Assignment
Director General	D-2	Dhaka, Bangladesh	4+4 (Four) Years

Duties and Responsibilities

The Director General of CIRDAP is accountable to the Governing Board and, in particular to the Executive Committee. S/he is responsible for carrying out the following functions and responsibilities:

- Acts as the legal and official representative of CIRDAP
- Ensures the work of CIRDAP in accordance with the policies, decisions and programmes of the Governing Board (GB) adopted by the GB, and within the guidelines of the Executive Committee (EC)
- Submits the following to the EC at each regular session through the EC Chairman:
  - a. a report on the work of CIRDAP;
  - b. audited accounts for the previous financial year;
  - c. a draft programme of work of CIRDAP and a draft budget of CIRDAP for the following financial year
- Convenes the sessions of the Governing Board (GB), the Executive Committee (EC) and the Annual Consultative Meeting (ACM) and all other meetings of CIRDAP
- Attends the GB, EC and ACM and other meetings and participates in these meetings
- Appoints the Deputy Director General and other staff members of CIRDAP in accordance with the policies and general principles and guidelines laid down by the GC
- Establishes the conditions of employment of the staff subject to the approval of the GC
- Provides leadership in raising funds to support CIRDAP programmes and activities, and in mobilizing the resources of its member countries, donor countries and agencies, and other institutions or organizations

Qualifications and Experience:

- Advanced university degree with specialization in studies and research work related to rural development (MD) and possibly television (PhD)
- Must be proficient in English both written and spoken
- Twenty years of experience in position of decision making in academic/research institutions, preferably including at least seven years in the field of rural development and poverty alleviation
- Should have sufficient background and experience in taking leadership in managing the dynamics of the work environment and plans in the national development levels in research of training, dissemination and extension

Citizenship:

Should be a citizen of CIRDAP Member Country

Age:

Should be between 40 to 50 years; age not to exceed 55 years on the date of assuming the post, i.e. 1 July 2008.

Application to be sent to:

Applications should be sent by the applicant to the Office of the Undersecretary for Support Services, Department of Agrarian Reform, Elliptical Road, Diliman, Quezon City or before 20 September 2007.

Level S-2, Step 1 (gross salary of US$ 18,141 per annum plus other allowances like Contributory Provident Fund, Group Life Insurance, Group Accident Insurance, Group Medical Insurance, Leave Travel Concession, Children Education Allowance, Rent Subsidy, Furniture Allowance, Transportation Allowance, Supplementary Hospitalization Insurance Policy for the spouse and a maximum of three children, Home Leave and Travel for Self and Family Members up to a maximum of five adult fares, fully furnished accommodation, Education Allowance for children, etc.) is payable in US Dollars. Local expenditure (PVCL, Maintenance of Furniture, Electricity and Water Bills, Telephone for Official use, one Cook-Bearer and one Housekeeper).

Ombudsman OKs filing of illegal detention raps vs Jaylo, 12 others

By Jennifer R. Uy

CHARGES ARE SET TO BE FILED again against controversial former police official Reynaldo Jaylo who was convicted for the 1990 killing of three suspected drug dealers last May.

Ombudsman Merceditas Gutierrez yesterday approved the filing of criminal charges against Jaylo and 12 members of the defunct Anti-Illegal Recruitment Task Force (ARTF) for the illegal detention and arrest of a crucial agency operator in September 2005.

Jaylo could not be reached for comment.

The recommendation to charge Jaylo and his companions with usurpation of authority and serious illegal detention was made by the Deputy Special Prosecutor.

To be charged with Jaylo are former police official Lucio Marcelo, 6DO1 Romero Noriega, PO1 Jaime Pineda, a certain PO2 E. Rosas, PO2 Francisco Quito, PO2 Geronimo Ojeda, PO Wilfredo Valenzuela, Corporal Calimag, Rodolfo Jose, Romeo Calimag, Nicasio Ramores and Dionisio Peña.

Marcelo and Jaylo, along with the late Gen. Robert Barbers and Manila Mayor Alfredo Lim, were collectively known as the "Boys Acre" when they were among the top officials of the Manila Police District.

The case against Jaylo and his companions was based on the complaint filed by Kenneth Bautista's wife, Mercelita, at the National Bureau of Investigation. Bautista, senior vice president of Filipinas Global Travel and Tours Corp., was suspected of being an illegal recruiter.

Mercelita accused the task force operatives of arresting her husband without an arrest warrant and holding him for more than three days in the ARTF office at Fort Bonifacio Complex in Manila.

In her ruling, Gutierrez said Bautista's detention was "very beyond" the officials' authority to operate since the policemen arrested Bautista on Sept. 27, 2005, two months after the ARTF was "removed by order."

The heinous crime in such jurisdiction has cellular phone for communication, but the calls were not recorded.

Vice mayor returns to childhood haunt, leads clean-up campaign at Manila pier

By Allison W. Lopez

HE USED TO SWIM WITH TRASH. Now he's helping clean it up.

Manila Vice Mayor Isko Moreno, the "poor boy from Tondo," returned yesterday to his childhood playground at Pier 2 in North Harbor, this time, to lead around 300 civic and government volunteers in removing garbage from the area.

"It's a good start for everybody who lives in the pier area because it means you take care of your own space," he said. "Now [illegible] anyone in the bay, no long-yang land reclaim. How can you clear the area outside your house if it's dirty inside it?" he said.

The Pier 2 Clean-up Day was part of the 75th anniversary celebration of shipping company Negros Navigation, and organized by its partner AsiaATN.

AsiaATN president Eduardo Bunyi said they had invited the 32-year-old former actor in their "clean-up marathon" because they heard he used to retrieve bottles in the area in his youth.

"My father was a seaworker here. We also sold trash collected at the pier," he said.

Despite growing up in poverty, Moreno finally excelled swimming in Manila Bay with his playmates.

According to Negros Navigation president Jon O. Tagud, the cleaning at Manila Bay was aimed at instilling increased environment consciousness among residents of nearby communities, and the clean-up participants.

Among those who helped in the drive were Manila Mayor Alfredo Lim, representatives from the Philippine Coast Guard, Bureau of Jail Management and Penology, Philippine Ports Authority, National Police Commission, Maritime Industry Authority, Subic Gabbat International, and Ilo Ilocos Teachers Association of Roxas Alumate School.

US accuses Iran of supporting Iraqi militias

BAGHDAD—THE UNITED STATES ACcused Iran in talks on Tuesday of increasing support for militias involved in bloodshed in Iraq but, in a rare sign of cooperation, agreed with Tehran to set up a panel to improve security.

In their second round of talks on Iraq this year after a long diplomatic freeze, US Ambassador to Iraq Ryan Crocker said he also challenged Iran over its supposed support for other radical groups in the Middle East such as Hamas and Hezbollah. Iran rejected all of the accusations, he said.

"We expressed concern over Iranian activities and support of violent militia elements through both arming and training," he said after meeting Iranian Ambassador Hassan Kazemi Qomi.

"The fact is, and we made it very clear in today's talks, that over the roughly two months we have actually seen militia activities—activities that can be attributed to Iranian support go up and not down," Crocker said. Iran agreed in principle to join a new trilateral security sub-committee to investigate issues such as support for extremist militias and al-Qaida in Iraq, Deputy MidEast security coordinator for the State Department said.

"They maintain they've serious about assisting Iraq to improve security and stability so the opportunity is in front of them. We'll measure it by actions on the ground," Crocker said, speaking later to reporters by telephone.

US President George W. Bush (search) took a more optimistic spin following such encounters on the rise, on Tuesday marketed up his efforts to link the US-led fight in Iraq to the broader battle against al-Qaida.

Bush cited newly declassified intelligence as he gave an impassioned response to criticism that the US base in Iraq has become a distraction from the wider war on terrorism.

"Al-Qaida in Iraq is a group founded by foreign terrorists, led largely by foreign terrorists and hard-to-a foreign terrorist leader" Osama bin Laden," Bush told an audience in an air force base in Charleston, South Carolina.

In Iraq, a suicide car bomber killed 26 people and wounded 70 on Tuesday in a crowded market near a maternity hospital in the Shiite town of Iskha, 100 kilometers south of Baghdad, police said.

Washington has accused Shiite Muslim Iran of fomenting violence in Iraq through support for Shiite Muslim militias.

Iran denies the charges and blames the 2003 US-led invasion for the bloodshed between Iraq's Shiite majority and Sunni Arab minority.

Reuters

Russia, Britain row over spy escalates

MOSCOW—RUSSIAN PRESIDENT Vladimir Putin on Tuesday denounced Britain for making hostility diversion and betrayed unilateral colonial thinking, in comments likely to escalate a row over the murder of Alexander Litvinenko.

Britain said Russia have each expelled four diplomats in a spat over the murder and Moscow refused to extradite the chief suspect in the case.

"What they propose is an obvious example of colonial thinking," Putin was quoted saying on Russian state television.

"They must have clearly forgotten that Britain is no longer a colonial power, there are no colonies left and, thank God, Russia has never been a British colony," Putin said.

Britain has demanded Moscow extradite Russian businessman Andrei Lugovoi so that he can be put on trial in London for Litvinenko's murder.

Russia has refused, citing its constitution, which forbids the extradition of Russian citizens.

"They should better change their brains than our constitution," Putin said at a meeting with youth organizations in Zvenigorod, some 120 kilometers northwest of Moscow.

Masters wearing an open chest and jeans and sitting surrounded by youth activists, a stern Putin used highly barbed language and sometimes seemed on the almost spitting out the word "Russia."

Asked for a reaction to Putin's comments, a Foreign Office spokesperson in London told Reuters: "We continue to look for a willingness from the Russian authorities to work constructively with us to bring this crime, committed in the UK, for justice in a British court." "Russia's refusal to work with us has been reasons heavily by Britain's hosting of non-Russia emigres resented by Moscow.

They include London-based billionaire businessman Boris Berezovsky, who has accused Putin of being behind the murder.

The Kremlin has called those allegations nonsense.

Britain courts have refused to extradite Berezovsky to Moscow.

"Days in London have left [Russians] hiding who are wanted for on-line enforcement bodies for committing grave and especially serious crimes," Putin said. "But London doesn't give a damn and gives refuge to people accused of committing especially grave crimes."

"And meanwhile they apply tougher standards to the others, including us. This includes handing our recommendations, which I think are dwelling to our nation, to amend the constitution," Putin said, opposed to be playing down to what he branded a "moral attack" with London saying he hoped the problems could be overcome.

Reuters

TSUNAMI DRILL. Residents and foreign tourists "evacuate" during a tsunami warning drill at a beach in Phuket, on July 25. Rescuers on speedboats plucked tourists out of the sea as sirens blared on Thailand's coast-the first full-scale test of the country's tsunami warning system.

More flights cancelled in Brazil

SAO PAULO—MORE THAN HALF OF all flights in Brazil were delayed or cancelled on Tuesday for the third straight day as the country's air crisis deepened following a deadly crash last week and a major radar outage.

Brazil's airports authority, Infraero, said 500 flights were delayed nationwide and 196 more were cancelled by the evening, further angering travelers who have already been subjected to repeated disruptions in the past 3 months.

"I've been trying to get home for a week," Gesia Ribeiro, an engineer from the Amazon city of Belem, shouted as she waited at Rio de Janeiro's international airport. "I haven't been able to go to work and I have had to pay for a hotel out of my own pocket." The chaos added tension as air power gripped the country. In Rio, passengers protested the delays by donning oxygen masks. In the southeastern city of Ribeirao, a group of riot troopers escorted the airport and occupied a plane until being removed by police, local radio reported.

Gol Linhas Aereas, the country's No. 2 airline, responded to the turmoil on Tuesday by cutting passengers to postpone tens of plane until next Monday when it will unveil a revamped route network.

Most of the delays and cancellations happened in the business capital Sao Paulo, where heavy rains on Monday and slick fog on Tuesday forced authorities to close Congonhas airport for hours at a time, setting off a ripple-effect of disruptions at other airports.

The aviation authority SBAC prohibited the sale of tickets for flights leaving from Congonhas, the country's busiest airport, until traffic normalized. It also limited long-distance flights out of Congonhas.

TAM Linhas Aereas, the No.1 airline, suspended ticket sales until Thursday for flights to and from Congonhas and Sao Paulo's international airport Guarulhos.

The downpours caused a small mudslide on the edge of the airfield at Congonhas that spilled over onto a highway that provides access to the terminal.

Reuters

Support for terrorism declining among Muslims, says US survey

WASHINGTON—FULL TO PEACOCK of Palestinians believe suicide bombing is justified but support for terrorism is falling in the wider Muslim world, according to a comprehensive US survey released on Tuesday.

The Pew Research Center said its annual "Global Attitudes" report also showed that the United States' image in Muslim countries remains "abysmal," and that solid majorities see Washington as a military threat.

Support for terrorist tactics has fallen in seven of the eight countries polled on that question since 2002, the Washington-based group said.

In Lebanon, those believing that suicide bombing is justified often or sometimes has dropped from 74 percent five years ago to 19 percent now. In Pakistan, where support for bin Laden has surged, the figure is just 9 percent.

In parallel, the Pew group reported "large drops in support for Osama bin Laden," the al-Qaida founder blamed for the Sept. 11, 2001 attacks on the United States.

Jordan, where the percentage of Muslims who have "confidence in Bin Laden as a world leader" has slumped 26 percentage points since 2003.

But in the Palestinian territories, 43 percent said suicide bombing was justified often, and 29 percent said sometimes. Just 6 percent said it was never justified, by far the smallest proportion of the places polled.

"Acceptance of extreme terrorist tactics in the Palestinian territories is remarkably stubborn across major demographic groups," including women, the young and the old, and those less religiously minded, Pew said.

Across the Muslim world, majorities believe the United States could become a military threat in their country including 93 percent of Bangladeshis, 77 percent of people in Arab ally Turkey, and 73 percent of Pakistanis.

AFP

Influential psychologist Albert Ellis dies at 93

NEW YORK—ALBERT ELLIS, ONE OF the most provocative figures in modern psychology and the founder of a renowned psychotherapy institute, has died at age 93.

He died from kidney and heart failure after a long illness, said his wife, Debbie Joffe Ellis.

"He helped countless people, and a large number of people he helped have help-other people," she said. "And in that, there's no question that he has influenced the world in an extremely positive way. In this crazy, violent world, he was a unique individual."

In the 1950s, Ellis invented what he called rational emotive behavior therapy or R.E.B.T., which stresses that patients can improve their lives by taking control of self-defeating thoughts, feelings and behaviors. His work, along with that of others including Dr. Aaron Beck, is considered the foundation of cognitive-behavior therapy.

"We all owe a great debt to Dr. Ellis," said Robert D'Amanda, executive director of the Albert Ellis Institute, which is located on Manhattan's Upper East Side. "His students and clients will remember him for his tremendous insight and dedication as a psychologist."

A 1982 survey of clinical psychologists ranked Ellis as the No. 2 most influential in the field—ahead of Freud and behind Carl Rogers, founder of humanistic psychology.

In recent years, Ellis had been dogged by illness and a stubborn fall. He mostly died from an infection in 2004, and has since been closer with pneumonia.

Ellis also was involved in legal battles with the institute he founded more than four decades ago, accusing its board of improperly removing him and amending his popular Friday seminars. The board said the executive was demanding of executive secretary.

Last year, a New York judge ruled that the board had wrongly removed Ellis with our proper notice and reinstated him. He returned to the institute in June, O'Connell said.

Though the fight saddened Ellis deeply and he said the institute refused to let him teach there, he remained his Friday night workshops in the building next door, he said.

"Nothing stopped him," she said. "Whenever he had an opportunity to contribute, he did, no matter the circumstances."

AP

ELLIS

The WORLD

Editor Leonard B. Gaerlan

POLAND woman vacationing on a beach at a resort town had 40-degree Celsius in Belgrade on July 25.

BUILDINGS and vehicles are covered in floodwaters, near Tewkesbury, England. Thousands of homes have already been evacuated because of flooding.

Heat wave kills 500; Britain flooded

BUDAPEST—UP TO 500 PEOPLE ARE ESTIMATED TO have died across Hungary last week, partly due to a heat wave gripping central and southeast Europe, Hungarian medical officials said on Tuesday.

Record-breaking high temperatures also killed 12 Bulgarians, one man in Montenegro and another man on the island of Corfu, Greek officials said, while fires in Bulgaria, Croatia and southern Greece fanned wildfires across a midsection of southeastern Europe.

In addition, Italy thousands of tourists were trapped on beaches in the Puglia region as a fast-moving bushfire burned people from campsites and hotels to run for their lives. At least two people have died, local authorities said.

Britain, however, was experiencing what many said was the worst summer in living memory. Emergency workers fought to hold back overflowing rivers as the worst floods to hit parts of England in years and villages, mainly in central England.

The worst toll appeared to come from Hungary which said the heat wave, reaching 41.9°Celsius in one part of the country, may have contributed to the early deaths last week of 500 people.

According to preliminary reports in Hungary, 2,203 had in the early deaths of 15,000 mostly elderly people.

"In this period, in the central area of Hungary ... this [heat] contributed to the premature death of 220 more people which (independent) to a national level means about 500 deaths," said the National Institute of Environmental Health.

In Puglia, search-party services used patrol boats and helicopters to rescue some 4,000 holidaymakers and residents in cabins, media reported.

Many had rushed to the beach in bathing suits, leaving all belongings behind. The fire spread quickly, threatening hotels and holiday villages, port police said. Four nationalities of those involved were not immediately clear.

Scientists blamed the heavy rains in Britain on the jetstream, a thin-moving air current that is now southerly than usual this year, bringing with it stormy weather.

"Extreme events such as we have seen overseas weeks herald the opener of climate change and it would be irresponsible to imagine that they won't become more frequent," Mark Stevens, executive director of The Chartered Institution of Water and Environmental Management, a scientific group, said.

But Alastair Southwell, an engineering professor at Oxford University, said there was not enough data to judge whether climate change was a factor in the flooding.

Anglia lashed 30 forest dams on other meteorologists predicted would be the hottest day of the year, with the temperature topping 32 degrees Celsius.

In Romania, the new deaths pushed the toll from the heat wave up to 51, and 10,000 people have been admitted to hospitals as the region's second devastating heat spell this year.

More than 20 people died in Romania, Turkey and Greece in June when the mercury shot up to 46 Celsius.

Fatalities in Bosnia, Serbia, Montenegro, Macedonia, Bulgaria and Greece have been ravaged by flames this week, blamed on record high temperatures after the dry winter.

In Macedonia temperatures hit scalding zone record of 46 degrees, and many parts of the country had no power.

In Bosnia, the town of Gduh, the Adriatic port of Bosnia and the mountain town of Trogrod declared states of emergency.

Police were in fire burning in Serbia's Bosnia province, and police, forestry officials and soldiers from the resident. Since last yesterday there EP38 hectare flames.

In Athens, Greeks and tourists walked with umbrellas and newspapers covering their heads. Many flocked to seek beaches.

"It's like having a sauna without having to pay, a free sauna from God," a woman shopping in Athens told Reuters TV.

Reuters

Philippine Economic Zone Authority

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

1. The PEZA-BEC was created pursuant to ...
2. The PEZA-BEC now invites prospective investors to apply for eligibility and to bid for the ...
3. Bidding will be conducted through open competitive bidding procedures using non-discretionary "pass/fail" criteria as specified in the Implementing Rules and Regulations of Republic Act 9184, otherwise known as the Government Procurement Reform Act. Bidding is restricted to Filipino citizens/organizations or to associations or joint ventures consisting of Filipino citizens/organizations with at least sixty percent (60%) ownership interest of the association or joint venture, and which are eligible to participate in the project as provided in the Constitution and pertinent laws.
4. Interested bidders may obtain further information from PEZA-BEC and inspect the Bidding Documents at the address given below from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday to Friday.
5. A complete set of Bidding Documents may be purchased by interested bidders from July 26 to August 24, 2007, from the address below and upon payment of a non-refundable fee in the amount of Four Thousand Pesos (P4,000.00). It may also be downloaded free of charge from the website of the Philippine Government Electronic Procurement System (PhilGEPS) and the website of the Philippine Economic Zone Authority (PEZA), provided that bidders shall pay the non-refundable fee for the Bidding Documents not later than the submission of their bids.
6. The PEZA-BEC will hold a Pre-Bid Conference open to all interested parties on August 14, 2007, 2:00 p.m. at the Ayala Center Branch 37 (Tutt) PEZA Conference Building, MCC Mandaluyong.
7. Bids must be received on or before 2:00 p.m. on August 24, 2007. All bids must be accompanied by a bid security in the form and amount stipulated in the Bidding Documents.
8. Bid opening shall be on August 24, 2007 at 2:00 p.m. at the Ayala Center Branch 37 (Tutt) PEZA Conference Building, MCC Mandaluyong. Bidders are encouraged to attend the opening but their presence shall not be required in order for the bid to be opened and considered.
9. In case any of the above dates is declared or declared as a non-working holiday, it will automatically be moved to the next working day.
10. The PEZA-BEC reserves the right to accept or reject any bid, annul the process and reject all bids at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected bidder or bidders.

Philippine Economic Zone Authority
BAC and Secretariat Secretariat
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Clinton, Obama spar over worst 'dictators'

WASHINGTON—DEMOCRATIC White House rivals Hillary Clinton and Barack Obama engaged on to each other in their first big showdown of the 2008 race, over orders to talk to Burma and North Korea.

As unanswering antagonists heard into the Democratic party her top challenger who "irresponsible and frankly naive" for saying he would meet what her campaign dubbed the "world's worst dictators" in his first year as president.

In a dueling interviews with a newspaper in the key electoral state of Iowa, Obama hit back, arguing that what was "irresponsible and naive" was Clinton's 2002 Senate vote to send US soldiers to Iraq based on faulty intelligence.

The war-weighed after a debate in South Carolina on Monday hinged a question about talking to US foes Cuba, North Korea, Venezuela, Iran and Syria.

Democratic front-runner Clinton spoke to the newspaper first, denying an Obama claim she would be "naive" enough to meet rogue rulers without preconditions and linking her with President George W. Bush's refusal to talk to such foes.

CLINTON

OBAMA

"What she's somehow mischaracterizing is my statement would be considered as not having asked what the meeting was about," Obama, 46, a 46-year-old first-term senator vying to be America's first black president, was quoted as saying.

"I didn't say those guys were going to come into the Oval Office on our first day in office," he said in an audio interview on the Quad City Times website.

"This is a fabricated controversy," Obama has repeatedly stressed he was opposed to the Iraq war, and highlights Clinton's vote to authorize it—before he was in the Senate—even as she has turned increasingly against the unpopular conflict.

Under Madeleine Albright, former president bill Clinton's last secretary of state, painted the former first lady's more measured answer as the debate, but she was open to diplomatic outreach last year, of handing US enemies propaganda coup.

Albright, who is a very regular, showed answer that showed her understanding of the whole process," Albright said.

AFP

India's 1st woman president sworn in

NEW DELHI—PATIL Pratibha Devisingh Patil was sworn into office on Wednesday, becoming the first woman to hold the position in the nation's six decades of independence.

"Achieving the country of over a billion people should free together and move forward together," she said in a speech after taking the oath of office in an elaborate ceremony.

"India stands at threshold of a new era of progress, and it should be a combined endeavor. We must ensure every section of society are equal partners in the development process," she said.

The 72-year old lawyer was elected by federal and state legislators last week after a bruising campaign to succeed outside scientist Abdul Kalam.

Under India's constitution, the prime minister wields executive power but the president plays a role in forming governments at state and federal levels, making the post fairly ceremonial in India's fractured political landscape.

Kalam, who was dubbed the "People's President" for his popular style, has said he will retire to the presidential palace with just "two small suitcases" and return to teaching at a university.

Patil, who ran a conservative campaign with her son pushed over her head, now presides from inside political obscurity by Sonia Gandhi, the powerful president of the ruling Congress party.

AFP

PATIL

Paraguayans hope for windfall from 'sweet' herb

A PLANTER holds a crop of Stevia in Amambay. The dictation has the investment of Paraguay's Guarani Indians for commerce, as no solution—PARAGUAYAN FARMERS ARE hoping to cash in on a low-calorie sweetener being made by the Coca-Cola Co. from a native plant long prized by indigenous people in the poor South American country.

Stevia, a shrub whose remains are up to 300-times sweeter than sugar but without the calories, has been the sweetener of choice among Paraguay's Guarani Indians for centuries.

Coca-Cola announced in May it would team up with US-based agricultural company Cargill Inc. to produce a stevia-based sweetener, an Oklahoma's farmers hope demand for stevia will increase even though it is not approved as a food additive in the United States or the European Union.

"Little by little, the world's realizing this product has benefits, and can overshadow the food industry," said Juan Carlos Pachar, the head of the Paraguay Stevia Chamber, a trade group representing producers.

The Paraguayan government said recently it had offered Coca-Cola an arrangement to be a founding stevia provider and opened up a $2-million credit line to producers to encourage farmers to increase production.

Officials say they want to expand stevia plantations from the current 1,200 hectares to 30,000 hectares by 2014.

Reuters

WHAT'S INSIDE
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Editor Teddyboy S. Molmisa Assistant Editor Francis T. J. Ochoa

■ Doping scandal rocks Tour de France anew/A25

Knights trip Lions in big 'NC' upset

YOUNG Aljamzad of San Beda gets a taste of the rugged competition as he's all wrapped up by two Knights' defenders in a bunk for the loose ball. AUGUST QUINO

By Mars Anthony Reyes

WHEN THE SMOKE OF BATTLE cleared, the Knights stood over the fallen Red Lions.

Six rhetorics scored in straight events in the final minutes, including a perfect execution of an "emergency play," as jurras pulled off a shocking 70-69 victory over defending champion San Beda last night in the NCAA men's basketball tournament at the Araneta.

The winning basket came with 3.2 seconds left as the Arellano U high-league record high to receive the rebound from Rafael Jimal under the goal and then scored to secure the Knights' fifth win in six games that had them with the Red Lions.

But the Lege Reds stood, led by FILIPE Smart big boss Manny F. Pangilinan, refused to accept the loss at first with the Lions' bench protesting what they perceived was a dismal Peng Escalol three seconds 20 ended.

The league technical officials, led by commissioner Chito Narvasa, stood by the referees' decision, however. TV replays later showed the shot dropped on the three point line when he scored.

"Even after hearing them, they are still the team to reckon with in the tournament," said Lemery coach Louie Alas.

Earlier, Jose Rizal booted St. Benilde, 74-63, to score its first back-to-back victory on their way to a 4-3 record.

The Heavy slipped to a league-worst 1-6 card.

Bono, who hurt his left shin during practice last Tuesday and was the last player to suit up before the game, nonetheless gave the Red Lions a 67-64 lead to a show-stopping after-loop that's courtesy of Ogie Menor with 1:03 to go.

Hot ticket: Ateneo-La Salle rivalry up today

THERE MAY BE LESS LUSTING SE- mester in Chito reserved Road.

But for the De La Salle Green, he have and the Ateneo Blue Eagles, the Unofficial men's basketball rivalry surely turned hot year turns into an even tougher one.

The Archers and the Eagles, both humbled early in the first round, take center court in powerhouses with

Inquirer is number one.

Thank you.

Ex-Ateneo ace Fonacier from Bull to Beerman?

By Marvang R. Cadillo

JAMES FONACIER, PHILIPPINE BASKETball Association's top rookie in 2005, could find himself with the Asi Miguel group in the next season which opens next ..13 with the Philippine Cup.

Red Bull is along in talks with representatives of the Asi Miguel group, which owns the Purefoods franchise, for Fonacier. Ateneo ace regarded as one of the smallest players in the league's elite.

Sources said that businessman Johnny Santos, Beerman's agent, is also in the negotiating table and has actually brokered the meeting between the two clubs.

The same source, who requested that he is not identified, said that Asi Miguel is offering Christian Cahigas, Francis Adriano and Pia Ave guard Brandon Cobbey in exchange for Fonacier.

It is still not clear, though, whether all three will be shipped to Red Bull or other teams will come in the mix.

The trade, which is reported to be finalized as early as today, is the third such blockbuster deal that will happen between the two teams in less than a year.

Early Tapiak, who was Red Bull's leading local scorer, was dealt to the Beermen before the start of last season, and Enrico Villanueva found his way to Asi Miguel with the bulk getting shuttled to big men Dion Camacho and Jaja.

Incidentally, Fonacier's first PBA contract expires at the end of the month along with eight other teammates of the team that finished third in the Fiesta Cup behind Alaska and Talk N Text.

Also expected to be key commodities in the free agent market are James Yap and Marc Pingris of Purefoods and newly crowned MVP Willie Miller of Alaska.

There are a total of 80 players whose teams have expired or about to end, with Barangay Ginebra hosting 12, including PBA Texas candidates Eric Menk and Jay Jay Helterbrand.

Of all the teams, Sta. Lucia has only four players needing new contracts—Hong Sonsea, Norman Grandeza, Manny Ramos and Jeffrey Cariaso.

The Phone Pals, who finished second to the Aces in a seven-game title series of the recent Fiesta Cup, have eight, including rookie Don Allado and Danny De Dominguez.

Danny Siegle's pact with Asi Miguel is also expiring, as well as that of Jason Webb and JA Transfer. But management sources agreed to talk them over soon immediately.

Norwood gets Japan visa

GUARD Norwood (on and from right) talks to Gordon Heat teams (right) as the Japanese Embassy in they wait, along with Kevin Reynolds (left) and Mark Cagulio, for their turn to see the Japanese visa. PONTO

THE JAPANESE EMBASSY FINALLY cleared Fil-Am Gabe Norwood to join the San Miguel-Pilipinas national team yesterday just hours before its departure to Yokohama for the 24th Nihon Asia Men's Championship beginning Saturday.

Norwood, a 6-foot-4 forward who can also play both guard positions and is also figure in the national team's bid to make a fourth in the Olympic Games in Beijing after 56 years, had earlier secured a clearance from the Indonesian embassy early last week.

He was issued a Philippine passport by the Foreign Affairs Office last Monday and spent half of Tuesday applying for an entry visa to Japan, according to Mikee Andres, PBA operations manager.

Norwood even joined the team's practice on morning, but only after assistant coach Bong Castro called him into Ateneo practice at the Sports Complex in Taft and drove him to the Japanese Embassy to secure a document question.

The Norwood left for Japan at 2:30 p.m. yesterday on a Philippine Airlines flight to Kansai International Airport in Osaka, where a two-hour bus ride to Yokohama awaits them.

"I wasn't really sure I'd be able to join the team, but I'm glad Norwood from the Cebu coach Tim Cone," Norwood beamed. "I thought I had everything completed yesterday (Tuesday), I thought I was done."

Apparently, he wasn't.

"I sort of jump into the car with coach Alex and sped off to the Embassy in the middle of practice," he said.

Just before departure, Norwood expressed his excitement over being the first time to Japan were behind him.

"I'm very excited. It's been a long process. Now that things have been taken care off, I can fully concentrate on helping the team get to Beijing. That's my main objective."

National coach Chot Reyes thanked the Japanese Embassy for expediting Norwood's visa.

"At least we're leaving the country with a full complement of 15 players," Reyes said. "It somehow lessens the uncertainties because everybody knows the value of Norwood and the versatility that he gives."

SMC AP takes on Iran, defending champion China and Jordan in the preliminary round of the PBA-slots, needing to win at least two times to reach the quarterfinal round.

Mikee wants Chot's discards for Thailand

IN HUDDLE

Keith Cadiz

STI whips UM; New Era scores

CASTRO

ROMERO

SEAG cage gold a must for RP 5, says Romero

NBC semis: Iligan battles Iloilo

Knights trip Lions in big upset

Taiwanese nine clinch WS berth

Hot ticket: Ateneo battles La Salle

Cyna books US match play ticket

CYNTHIA RODRIGUEZ FIRED A ONE-UNDER par 71 and easily made it to the match play round of the 2007 US Girls Junior Golf Championship at the Traverse Golf and Country in Lakewood, Washington Tuesday.

Rodriguez, who finished par 72 on the first day of the 36-hole stroke play event, birdied two of her first six holes but stumbled with back-to-back bogeys from No. 7 to make the turn at even par.

She went two under again with birdies on Nos. 11 and 14 then dropped a shot on the par-3 17th.

Rodriguez moved into the 64-player match play phase in joint 37th with a one-under 143.

The 15-year old Rodriguez drew Alexis Lee of California in the first round of match play.

Kimberly Kim of Hawaii fired the two-day medalling with 138, shooting a 72 Tuesday after a sterling 66 former Pia Sia rang took the No. 2 spot with a 139 after an 69.

Doping scandal rocks Tour de France anew

Fan, race favorite Vinokourov fails test

PARIS, FRANCE—CYCLING AND ITS premiere event, the Tour de France, were reeling from yet another blow that threatened what was left of the event's credibility: A failed doping test by one of its biggest stars on Tuesday.

Alexandre Vinokourov tested positive for a banned blood transfusion after finishing last weekend's stage, prompting his future team to pull out and leaving police on a manhunt for team boss.

Tour director Christian Prudhomme said that although the test wouldn't go on the latest drug case shouted cycling's coming system doesn't work.

"We are absolute failure of the system," he said. "It is a system which does not defend the biggest race in the world. There's a system which can't last."

Hours before Tuesday's bombshell, Tour leader Michael Rasmussen was finishing a leading reputation he helped drag cyclists before the Tour start. He will seems likely to claim victory in Paris on Sunday.

IT'S GOODBYE for Alexandre Vinokourov

All this on top of the scandal-breaking 2006 champion Floyd Landis, who was unable to defend his crown because he failed a drug test during last year's Tour.

Blood-boost, blame-travel Vinokourov, who placed third in the 2005 Tour, is a fan favorite, admired for his grit, determination and string of stage wins at this and previous Tours.

He had been considered a pre-race favorite to win, but stumbled in the first week of the three-week race. With stitches in both knees, he struggled for a few days but recovered to win stages on Saturday and Monday—a turnaround that some seems designed to be seen. AP

Retired stars want use of lie detector for referees

NEW YORK—A GROUP OF NATIONAL BASketball Association legends called for the league to impose lie-detector tests and more frequent and tougher background checks on referees in the wake of a gambling scandal.

Leo Ellenzo, a 58-year member in the 1970s who presides over the 3,000-member National Basketball Retired Players Association, said on Tuesday that accused match-fixing referee Tim Donaghy has done major damage to the sport.

"The honesty and integrity of our great game is at stake," Ellenzo said. "It's the very least, the honor of our sport has been damaged. There is a tremendous amount of work to be done in restoring that public trust."

Donaghy resigned after FBI officials told the NBA he had been linked to gambling as part of their investigation of a larger criminal network.

While supportive of NBA commissioner David Stern, Ellenzo prodded the NBA boss to toughen measures restricting players from outings referees to the same way he has pursued drug testing for players to ensure the sport is credibility.

"We urge the commissioner to immediately adopt measures that begin to heal the damage done to the game," Ellenzo said. AFP

Squash girl bags bronze in HK

ZONA ANDRIOS BAGGED A BRONZE medal in the gold-conducted 2007 Hong Kong Junior Open squash championships in the Crown Colony. Andrade summed her fall in the under-15 category with a 12-5, 9-5, 10-8 victory over Kristal Lee Ji-Hyun. She went three more times to finish behind gold medalist Dong Jia Wing and runner-up Wong Wai Nam, both of Hong Kong. Arnaza bested Malaysia's Julie Chan, 9-7, 9-2, 8-7 and Hong Kong's Wong, 9-2, 10-8, 8-10, 8-11 and 11-9. Chan, 9-2, 8-3, 9-7. Two HK girls — Poonam Ambal Mahata and Jenny Ambach — joined Arnaza in the event.

IOC okays Youth Olympics; combat sports limited

By Jane Navarro

PHILIPPINE OLYMPIC COMMITTEE chief Robert Aventajado announced Tuesday that the IOC has approved the holding of the Youth Olympic Games in 2010.

Aventajado said the youth edition of the Games will target athletes from 14 to 18 years of age with the summer and winter versions to be held two years apart.

Gardan said some of the extreme sports, however, will be limited and carefully chosen by the international Olympic body to protect the health of the participants.

"This is good news for us," said Aventajado. "Aside from the possibility of being selected for winning to qualify in future Olympic Games, our young athletes can aspire to represent our country in the Youth Olympic Games."

Aventajado explained that the Philippine Olympic Festival, the local Olympic body's grassroots development program, would now be aligned with the Youth Olympic Games.

According to the IOC website, the Youth Olympic Games, which is expected to draw around 3,000 participants, were conceived to address the decline in the observance of sports among the younger generations and to give them an education based on values.

Aventajado also said the Mindanao Qualifying Games of the POF will be held in Cagayan De Oro City from Aug. 14-19.

ILLAM SOFTBELLES: Champions and Special Kellogs archdeacons

Softbelles off to US

THE INTERNATIONAL LITTLE League Association of Manila (ILAM) softball will leave for Portland, Oregon, to compete in the Little League World Softball Tournament next month.

The team won the National title and the Asia-Pacific tournament to bag the right to represent the country in the biggest international meet for the young in the sport.

The team members are veteran Cristina Bacerdoje, Stella Mae Jusa, Tara Dadelli, Jessy Singh, Mel Ex, Inez Diet, OC Cruz, Jarvel Fernandez, Julie Dizaingo, Elle Ann Domingo, and Bobbie Sanoy. The coach is Alexis Cayagan.

The Illam girls also took up the cause of General Kellogg, the WGO building bonsai and scholarships for the game by being its ambassador throughout their travels and sharing their mission of hope to the Filipino community in Portland.

CKP 168 grabs cage lead

Flores, Mighty Filter Kings, Bank ONE Sportswear, Team Supercross, Pirates and Mother, Brother games. North Luzon (dated 0:00 GMT: 17-44 - while The Bo, the points demolished MAGSAYSAY Dr. Ruben, 88, 21 to both sides in 2-1). (Meanwhile, registration is now open for the league's 3rd Conference which starts on Aug. 18. Interested parties may call 826-1638 or text 0917-8949828 or visit the league website at www.metrobasketball.net.

SPORTSWATCH

San Juan Coliseum derby today

THE VARSANNA 4-CORE BOXER KIDDIES OF YORK will be top-1 matches slated starting 9 a.m. at the San Juan Coliseum. A prize worth P500,000 awaits the champion of the event that requires an entry fee of P1,000. Body trucks are Crean Sto. Domingo, Renato Dias and Louie Cua. The next up is Magsaysay Dr. Pirates will be supported by The SJE Eastern Club and Gentleman Cockers Association of the Philippines (GCAP). The Pit Senior Showdown 8-stop derby, jointly promoted by Benny Ty and Manny Bertiano, kicks off Sept. 1, 2 and 3. There will be a P1.5-million guaranteed prize for an entry fee of P12,000 and a minimum bet of P5,000. Interesting matchups and tickets are also 3. For more info, please call (0917) 521-7484, (0920) 201-3041, (75-5356 and 851-0612.

Las Piñas cocktest kicks off

CYCLING ENTHUSIASTS AND LADDING DILLIES WILL BE HAVING A BREAK in Las Piñas City this Saturday as the Festival Mix Bike Club Classic beginning at 11 a.m. The fastest win champions, to be declared after every nine laps, will receive P10,000, second, P5,000 and third, P3,000. Coliseum manager Alan Tolibas and Big Boy Cortez group will host the event. Alternatively, there is a separate scrapping of bags and short and would be the UP 1-mag derby (mag, 23 and 25). Participants may also bring their vehicle at the LPC office every Saturday and Sunday. Interested parties may contact (02) 833-1082 and (0920) 710-1671 and (0928) 761-0215. Bags handed by either set breakers groups will be accepted but subject to re-classification.

Republic of the Philippines
DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND EMPLOYMENT
National Capital Region
[illegible]

NOTICE OF FILING OF APPLICATION/S FOR ALIEN EMPLOYMENT PERMIT/S (AEP/S)

Notice is hereby given that the following [illegible] Alien Employment Permits with this Regional Office applications for Alien Employment Permit/s:

Name and address of Company/Employer	Name of Foreign National	Position
UNILEVER PHILIPPINES INC. [illegible]	[illegible]	Assistant Packaging Development Manager
YOSHIMA TRAVEL & TOURS CORP. [illegible]	[illegible]	Assistant Tour Coordinator
HANDICAP INTERNATIONAL INC. [illegible]	[illegible]	Program Director
LAWS TEXTILE MILLS LTD., INC. [illegible]	[illegible]	Vice-President for Administration
LAWS TEXTILE MILLS LTD., INC. [illegible]	[illegible]	Vice-President for Product Safety
LAWS TEXTILE MILLS LTD., INC. [illegible]	[illegible]	Vice-President for Manufacturing
LAWS TEXTILE MILLS LTD., INC. [illegible]	[illegible]	Vice-President for Finance
KAYON MUSIC CAR REPAIR, INC. [illegible]	[illegible]	Technical Consultant on Painting Work Repair
KAYON MUSIC CAR REPAIR, INC. [illegible]	[illegible]	Technical Consultant on Painting Work Repair
ENGLISH MARIBINA ACADEMY, INC. [illegible]	[illegible]	Senior Korean Manager
ENGLISH MARIBINA ACADEMY, INC. [illegible]	[illegible]	Supervisor
[illegible]	[illegible]	Assistant Manager International Marketing
PHIL. TRANSPORT XPRESS CORP. [illegible]	[illegible]	Operations Manager
[illegible]	[illegible]	Sales Consultant
[illegible]	[illegible]	President
POINT TOUR & TRAVEL INC. [illegible]	[illegible]	General Manager
POINT TOUR & TRAVEL INC. [illegible]	[illegible]	Marketing Manager

Name and address of Company/Employer	Name of Foreign National	Position
AIR DESIGN 8 TECHNICAL SERVICE, INC. [illegible]	[illegible]	President
ELITE ENGLISH TRAINING CENTER, INC. [illegible]	[illegible]	International Marketing Manager
EVERLIFE TRAINING CENTER INC. [illegible]	[illegible]	Chinese Teacher
MH TECHNICAL SERVICES CORPORATION [illegible]	[illegible]	Technical Supervisor
MH TECHNICAL SERVICES CORPORATION [illegible]	[illegible]	Technical Supervisor
BANK OF CHINA LIMITED MANILA BRANCH [illegible]	[illegible]	Deputy Manager
FRUIT-LAND CORPORATION [illegible]	[illegible]	Quality Control Officer
NEW CORE TOWN CORPORATION [illegible]	[illegible]	General Manager
LEE JO RESTAURANT [illegible]	[illegible]	General Manager
SAMSUNG TRADING & TOURS CORP. [illegible]	[illegible]	General Manager
"EXTRA FAM (PHILIPPINES) INC. [illegible]	[illegible]	Processing Director
"EXTRA FAM (PHILIPPINES) INC. [illegible]	[illegible]	Managing Director
"EXTRA FAM (PHILIPPINES) INC. [illegible]	[illegible]	Financial Manager
D'GE PHILIPPINES, INC. [illegible]	[illegible]	Vice-President for Operations & Accounting
AL TAIB ABDE MARITIMER SERVICES, INC. [illegible]	[illegible]	Marketing Director

If you have any information/objection in this above-mentioned application please communicate with the Regional Director.

ISABEL C. PANGANIBAN-BAYTUSEÑA
Director

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BUSINESS

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E-mail: business@inquirer.com.ph

BIR orders massive tax-compliance audit

San Miguel Corp. CEO Eduardo Cojuangco Jr. at the company's stockholders' meeting at Hulo Norte Country Club. NOEL PABUALAN

Regional examiners to target 30% of taxpayers

By Michelle V. Ramos

THE BUREAU OF INTERNAL REVENUE HAS ORDERED ITS EXAMiners to conduct a massive tax-compliance audit nationwide in an attempt to recover from the revenue-collection shortfall in the first half of the year.

Bib Officer-in-Charge Lilian Hefti issued a memorandum to revenue district officers all over the country to audit at least 30 percent of taxpayers registered in their offices before the year ends.

Revenue Memorandum Order No. 52-2007 came after the BIR was told to implement measures that will direct up revenue collections and enable it to meet its full-year target despite the slippage in the first six months.

The BIR, the biggest revenue contributor among government agencies, fell short of its P571.3-billion target for the first six months by P58.6 billion.

The BIR's underperformance has been blamed for the government's breaching of the budget deficit ceiling of P51.3 billion officially set for the January-June period. The actual deficit for the first six months was P61 billion.

The BIR was originally tasked to collect P760 billion in taxes this year, but this target was later reduced to P748 billion to help ensure the government keeps its deficit for the entire year at or below the ceiling of P63 billion.

BIR Deputy Commissioner Melchor Arpo told reporters that prior to the issuance of RMO No. 52-2007, revenue district offices (RDOs) were not pressured to audit as many taxpayers in a given period partly because of limited manpower.

BIR TARGETS P4

Imports fell 3.4% in May to $4.45B

THE COUNTRY'S IMPORTS FELL 3.4 PERcent to $4.45 billion in May from the same month last year, dragged down by the double-digit decline in demand for imported electronics, the National Statistics Office reported yesterday.

The 3.4-percent contraction in May followed the 1.6-percent year-on-year drop recorded the previous month.

Electronics imports alone—composed largely of raw materials assembled in the Philippines to produce consumer electronic products in their intermediate form—fell 10.6 percent year-on-year to $1.77 billion. Electronics is also the country's major export product.

This brought the country's total imports from January to May to $20.41 billion, only 2 percent higher than the year-ago figure.

IMPORTS B4

Jollibee tests new restaurant concept with *Tio Pepe's Karinderia*

By Elizabeth Sanchez-Lacson

FAST-FOOD GIANT JOLLIBEE FOODS CORP. has tested a new restaurant concept or a "karinderia" type that serves Filipino food at mid-low prices.

In a disclosure to the Philippine Stock Exchange, Jollibee said it has introduced "Tio Pepe's Karinderia," which aims to lure the workforce in urban centers. The pilot restaurant is located in Cubao, Quezon City.

Jollibee said the low-priced Filipino food is the biggest segment in the Philippine "eating outside-of-home" market. This includes canteens that are typically cooked and served in Filipino homes.

"This is also a highly fragmented, inefficient market operating mainly in the informal sector of the economy.

"If the venture becomes successful, JFC would be able to seize this industry segment

JOLLIBEE B4

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Currencies

USD PHILIPPINE PESO EXCHANGE RATE

P 45.84 = $ 1

As of 5 p.m. July 25, 2007

Stock Market

PSE COMPOSITE INDEX

Source: Bloomberg News

Stocks hit 1-month low

BANK PRICES IN ASIA TUMBLED TO A ONE-MONTH LOW AS investors fled from weakened financial stocks on concerns the subprime mortgage crisis in the United States will hurt their earnings, pushing the region's benchmark indexes to their lowest close in a month.

The composite index fell 80.73 points to 3,340.13, off a high of 3,780.29.

It was the heaviest trading since June 19, when it settled at 3,342.73.

The broader all-share index fell 88.80 points to 2,066.92.

Southeast Asia's benchmark gainers: SPI to FE with 48 stocks, Ayala Land with 3.3 billion shares worth P6.1 billion.

Ben Rodrigo of Sunspike Securities said: "The recent market is dependent on the US market and I predict they'll dig into the oversold (negative sentiment to) (P) positions.

He said the selling from foreigners accelerated as investors began to fully digest a recent statement by Fitch Ratings, which cited doubts on the government's ability to meet its budget deficit this year below its ever-selling of P63 billion as for a poor fiscal performance in the first half.

"Investors are being very cautious right now and negative news such as that of Fitch Ratings are making it hard to judge companies' worth, and pursuing at the chance of realizing their gains," Rodrigo said.

Chloe Tan of online broker FirstAsiaTrade said investors were worried about the rejection rates Filipino government billed to address its fiscal problems.

"It could affect the country's credit standing and that would scare the stability the market is currently enjoying," he said.

The biggest decliners included shares in two subsidiaries of conglomerate Ayala Corp. Ayala Land slid 70 centavos to P11.60, and Bank of the Philippine Islands was down P2 to P92. AFP

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The new BMW 5 Series. Executive Arrival.

IPVG signs up Korean partners for target markets

By Rita T. Olchondra

LISTED INFORMATION AND COMmunications company IPVG Corp. has forged a strategic partnership with Korean firms Jungdael Academy (Philippines) Inc. and Sabichab.com Corp. to expand its reach into the educational tourism and Internet cafe markets.

IPVG and Jungdael, a pioneer of English language coaching in Korea, will jointly set up Philippines-based language schools. They will provide long-distance tutoring to Korean-based students.

Jungdael was founded two years ago in Manila and is already widely recognized for its academic reputation. It is also one of the Tesda-accredited schools here in the Philippines.

Meanwhile, IPVG has also collaborated with IT company Sabichab.com to tap Korean Internet users and operators under Starzone. Starzone Center, one of Korea's fastest growing Internet cafe franchisers, PRO more than 20,000 Korean members. Station 118 is strategically located in key locations such as Makati, Sheraton, Ermita Mosaic, Baguio and Boracay.

Sabichab.com is an IT company offering web-related and e-commerce services. Company president and CEO Dong Hun Lee said that working with IPVG enabled the company to serve the Korean online market and to expand its reach to the local market through its new chain of Internet cafes, called Hoobed.

IPVG CEO Enrique Gonzales said in a disclosure to the Philippine Stock Exchange that the Korean phenomenon sets the stage for major drivers of growth in the Philippine economy.

He added that the partnerships would help their Korean partners expand their presence in the Philippines at the same time.

Long-distance tutoring, Internet cafés

Globe sweetens mobile Internet service

GLOBE TELECOM INC. EXPANDED THE availability of Yahoo! services for mobile Internet users by offering free downloads of Yahoo! Go 2.0 and Yahoo! contents on the myGlobe WAP site, as well as a 50-percent discount on transfers.

Yahoo! Go 2.0 is now available for downloading free of charge from the myGlobe WAP site. Globe subscribers can also text "YGO" to 2992 to receive an SMS reply that includes a WAP link for the free client download over the-air to the mobile phone.

Yahoo! Go 2.0 is a suite of Yahoo! applications such as Yahoo! Mail, Calendar and Address Book that transforms the mobile Internet experience through a unique product design, ability to personalize with content from the entire Internet and a reinvention of mobile search. For example, with Yahoo! Go 2.0 subscribers, personal channels for Mail, News, Finance, Sports, Entertainment, Weather, Flickr™ photos and search can be customized.

Meanwhile, Yahoo! contents's fast search results that are easy to read on mobile phones and expands access to News, Images, Finance, Weather, Flickr™, Web and mobile Web results with easy navigation to other applications.

"With tens of millions of Globe & Yahoo! customers, this collaboration helps solidify our respective leadership positions in mobile service innovation," Globe president and CEO Gerardo C. Ablaza Jr. said in a statement. "Yahoo! is the dominant Internet leader in the Philippines and Globe is committed to bringing the best Internet experience to Philippine mobile subscribers."

Rita T. Olchondra

Maynilad to get $60M in additional equity infusion

By Elizabeth Sanchez-Larsen

CONSTRUCTION GIANT DMCI Holdings Inc., the group of Dong Kong conglomerate First Pacific Co. Ltd. and Investment Bank Ashmore Group will infuse an additional $60 million into DMCI-MPIC Water Co., the joint venture that won the bid for 84 percent of Maynilad Water Services Inc. early this year.

The additional investment is said will raise the total capital of DMCI-MPIC Water to $180 million from $120 million. DMCI president Isidro Consunji is said after DMCI's stockholders' meeting yesterday.

DMCI will contribute $20 million to the equity infusion. The funds were raised from the recent sale of 400 million new shares to the Consunji family's private investment firm, Davies Corp.

The total $160 million capital of DMCI-MPIC Water will be used to pay part of a debt secured from Calyon Bank and JP Morgan last year that was used to pay Meyrill Lynch creditors and fund capital expenditures after the bidding was won by the consortium.

Some $250 million of the $447-million debt will be replaced by new loans from local banks.

DMCI chief finance officer Herbert Consunji said the $60 million infusion would be implemented after the lifting of a temporary restraining order on the water price hiking Maynilad's rehabilitation rate.

The petition for a restraining order with the Court of Appeals was filed by a lawyer of the oppositors' union of Maynilad this year, a source said.

DMCI and Metro Pacific were said to get Maynilad out of rehabilitation this month.

Maynilad holds a 25-year concession granted by the state-led Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System and MWSS to provide water in the west zone of Metro Manila. Maynilad covers nine cities and three municipalities in Metro Manila and one city and five municipalities in Cavite.

It currently supplies 2.1 billion liters a day to some 6 million people in the west zone.

Maynilad's capital expenditures over the life of the concession is P40 billion, DMCI said. The concessions aims to improve Maynilad's nonrevenue water or water losses from 63 percent to 30 percent by 2021 and raise the water coverage to 95 percent this year from the current 68 percent.

$200-M Asean Fund to invest in RP

SINGAPORE-BASED ASCENDAS PTE. Ltd., Asia's leading business space solutions provider, has announced the launch of its Ascendas Asean Business Space Fund (Asean Fund) at $200 million. The Asean Fund is expected to invest primarily in the key re-emerging markets of the Philippines, Vietnam and Malaysia.

Specifically, it will invest in a portfolio of quality business and industrial properties in decentralized business district and suburban office space, technology-related facilities, as well as science, biotech and IT-related assets. The Fund will also invest in mixed development projects as well as industrial and logistics facilities.

Ascendas specializes in developing, managing and marketing IT parks, industrial parks, business parks, science parks, high-tech facilities, office and retail space.

Chiang Khai Chiang, Ascendas president and CEO said: "The Asean Fund will enable investors to participate in a diversified geographical portfolio with exciting opportunities arising from the emerging economies of Vietnam, Malaysia and the Philippines. The current growth potential in the industrial as well as IT (information technology) and BPO (business process outsourcing) sectors has generated greater demand for high-quality business space. This is an area where Ascendas can play a role in setting new benchmarks for business space solutions and bringing our unique Ascendas business lifestyle to new markets."

Eng Beng Kheong, Ascendas' CEO of Southeast Asia Operations, said: "The Asean Fund is an ideal vehicle for sophisticated investors to invest in real estate, both matured and development assets, in some of the region's fastest growing economies. We are committed to delivering attractive yields, stable income and capital growth to investors."

"From the initial size of $200 million, we target to grow the fund eventually to $400 million with an asset size worth about $1 billion. We are actively exploring a pipeline of assets in Vietnam, Malaysia and the Philippines. There is growing potential from the additional properties and development projects that meet our investment criteria," the official said.

BIR orders ...

For coverage B-1

BIR chief Jose Isidro Camacho said the 18-percent target for the BOCs is three up revenue collection.

Angeles said there were about 13,000 to 15,000 registered taxpayers per BOC.

Examiners were asked to prioritize in their audit businesses suspected of falling short of their improved tax remittances in the first quarter as seen in the BIR's "benchmarking" method.

Under the benchmarking method that was implemented last year the BIR sets a per industry benchmark on the percentage share of sales — such as value-added tax and income tax — to the gross income. Taxpayers that fall below the benchmarks are subjected to audit, and those found to have avoided taxes less than their obligations are asked to rectify their omissions.

One audit strategy used by the BIR is the first verification of earnings that Embarcadero phrased wherein the agency uses third-party information on the purchases made by clients to check if the sales declarations made by a corporate taxpayer were accurate.

Earlier, the BIR also ordered an assessment to check out the assistance of taxes withheld by the country's top 10,000 corporations from their suppliers. The National Internal Revenue Code requires large companies to withhold part of the income and value-added tax liabilities of their suppliers acting from the sale of the latter to the former.

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Gov't cuts BIR, Customs tax collection targets

Sale of assets seen to make up for shortfall

By Michelle V. Rosca

THE INTERAGENCY DEVELOPMENT Budget Coordination Committee (DBCC) has slashed the government's tax and duty collection target for the year by about P50 billion in view of the poor first semester performance of both the Bureau of Internal Revenue and Customs.

But the DBCC, which sets the government's economic and fiscal targets, stated the government's target revenue from its privatization program in a bid to still meet the total revenue target for the year and stay within the budget deficit ceiling of P63 billion.

A source from the DBCC said the BIR's tax collection target for the year was reduced from P760.8 billion to P741.3 billion, while that of the Bureau of Customs was cut from P228.2 billion to P223.1 billion.

To cover for the reduction in tax collection, the government has raised its nontax revenue target to P143.2 billion from P133.4 billion. The current income of the government comes in the form of proceeds from privatization, fees and charges collected by line agencies, and dividends from state-owned firms.

However, the increase in the nontax revenue collection is expected to come largely from privatization.

The government raised its privatization revenue target to P53.2 billion from P25.1 billion, as it fixed up for sale big-ticket assets including stakes in San Miguel Corp., Manila Electric Co. and Philippine National Oil Co.-Energy Development Corp. (PNOC-EDC). The sale of these shares is targeted for completion within the year.

A source from the DBCC said it was prudent to double the revenue targets of the BIR and the BOC as these two had already been showing difficulty to raise their collections.

If all the assets lined up for privatization were sold this year, the government's revenue projection would be considered conservative. Earlier estimates showed the government would generate about P68 billion from its SMC stake, P6-P10 billion from its Meralco stake, and billions more from PNOC-EDC.

The Department of Finance earlier said the government was sticking to its goal of reducing the budget deficit to only P63 billion this year, from last year's P94.8 billion, despite the huge tax collection shortfall in the first half.

Besides beefing up efforts to pry cartier assets, the DOF said, the government had also ordered the BIR and the BOC to implement measures to enhance efficiency in tax collection. Finance officials said though that the BIR could only recover part of the shortfall for the first half, and still collect about P20 billion less than its original target of P760.8 billion.

The goal of limiting the deficit this year to only P63 billion is consistent with the aim of hitting a balanced budget by next year.

The DBCC said the government was not wrapping up its commitment to investors and the capital markets that it would be working on addressing a new deficit starting next year.

The other day, international credit rating firm Fitch Ratings released a report projecting a P125-billion deficit for the Philippines, urging the government's failure to collect revenues as targeted in the first half.

Finance Secretary Margarito Teves, however, issued a statement saying that the expected proceeds from privatization and efforts to increase tax collection would make up for the first half's shortfall.

The poor tax collection in the first half led the Palace to let go of former Revenue Commissioner Jose Mario Buñag and tasking Deputy Commissioner Lilian Hefti as its officer in charge.

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo leads the handing of the Micro Express Taxi Facility at the Renaissance Hotel in Makati City. With the President are (from left) Edgar Cisneros, president and chief executive officer of People's Credit and Finance Corp., and Presidential Management Staff head and oversight officer for Micro, Small and Medium Entrepreneurship (MSME) Cerge Remonde. The Micro Express Taxi Facility aims to make it easy for MSMEs to relocate micro-financing centers to their areas. The banner says the following message: "Micro (space) find (space) name of city" and send in 2992. To find an MFI in the provinces, micro entrepreneurs should send the following message: "Micro (space) find (space) name of province (comma) name of town" and send to 2992.

Lady's luck

BREAKTIME

Commodo R. Bacud III

THIS MONTH'S OFFICIAL COURTESY of the DOF—which means the Department of Finance, not "duty, old and fat"—is a big cut to the collection target of the BIR.

It's a hefty slice of P40 billion, according to BIR insiders.

In all likelihood, the DOF is only helping the acting commissioner of the BIR, the canny CPA-lawyer Deputy Commissioner Lilian Hefti, who replaced former BIR boss Jose Mario Buñag starting this month, to hit the much lower target. She is a lucky lady for obvious reasons.

Just when we thought the DOF was really dead set about letting the revenue targets of the (formerly cute) administration, given the Palace head-to-fist Buñag apparently for the BIR's missing its target early this year, the DOF slips this one quietly.

Do we get it that the targets were really unrealistic? Was who set the target in the first place?

* * *

LIST YOU think that the nominees are not going to come knocking on—or better yet, "banging"—the door. the targets or does not do anything to slow down those in the Bureau with some wicked intention.

On the morning from what I heard in business, those detailed Mr. Lu, secretary of accountancy from the BIR are now flying all over business town.

The BIR has the power to issue LOI to conduct tax audits on corporations that the BIR suspects of committing tax fraud.

In business, it is not a secret that such LOIs have been abused in the past. They become the lessons for unscrupulous BIR people to harass businesses.

During his time, however, former Revenue Commissioner Jose Mario Buñag insisted that the BIR would only issue LOI if it had prima facie evidences of fraud.

That took longer the case today. Officially Commissioner the owner of a big fast-food chain "took out"

* * *

THURSDAY promoted head of the BIR large taxpayer unit it the same BIR office in Makati for whom the LOIs at the Palace issued a special executive order, to put him in that much-sought-after position in the business.

So, it's none other than Charlie (a.k.a. Cesar) Lim, the former SEC-in Makati. He now virtually heads the—er, itself we say—"plum" unit in the entire Bureau, since early the BIR acting commissioner herself—Lilian Hefti—was placed on top of him.

Philippines—the commissioner, whether acting or not, always has other things to do, aside from rummaging through the records of big taxpayers!

Moreover, it does not make sense for Hefti to accept the BIR top post, a position that is so notorious with the cases of the Cojuangcos, which ends in 2010. And that's less than three years from now.

But Hefti is young enough to be my daughter. I mean, really, she still has many years left in the bureau as a career CPA-lawyer.

True, novel guru assured that the Lilian has some other guy lined up for the BIR position. Business is eagerly watching.

In the meantime, they have to deal with those LOIs that are now flying all over town like blood-sucking bats.

* * *

SURE, the Malacañang creation called PEZA, or the Presidential Anti-Smuggling Group, filed criminal cases against some people who were suspected of involvement in the alleged smuggling of billions of pesos worth of imported fuel out of the Subic free ports.

PASG Antonio Villar Jr. ordered the filing of the cases against officials and stockholders of the company called Tri-Solid Mexico Services.

They are Veronica Alcantara, Eduardo de Jesus, Imelda Arias, Yolanda Galicia to, Rafael Sison and Oliver Lim.

Oliver Lim is said to be the son of Jimmy Lim, who also has operations at the Subic free port, importing used vehicles and heavy equipment, which he auctions off in Malolos, Bulacan.

The charges filed against the six companies and officials of public documents and violation of the Tariff and Customs Code.

And that's it?

* * *

ACTUALLY, the Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority conducted an audit of the company's fuel importations in the past couple of years.

The audit showed that the company could not account for some 122 million liters of imported fuel—still with unpaid taxes and duties, at that.

Inside the Subic free port system, such fuel importation is tax free, as long as it stays inside the free port area.

Let's talk only of the e-VAT. The tax, explained, or "relaxing" fuel importation of Tri-Solid must involve close to P500 million in e-VAT—still not paid for!

And that's only so far this year, according to various sources.

* * *

AS I SAID, the PASG filed cases of liability, since Tri-Solid had claimed that the imported fuel was used for tax-free purposes.

From what I gathered, the company claimed that it had sold the fuel to companies that were entitled to tax-free fuel importation.

Unfortunately, at least one of the companies denied to the authorities that it had ever bought tax-free fuel from Tri-Solid.

So what happened to those millions of liters of imported fuel? Remember, boss, members were trucklloads upon truckloads of imported fuel. And Tri-Solid could not produce the proof to show where they all went. I mean, it could not have used the fuel to water the plants at Subic, right?

But the real question is this: How come the Bureau of Customs is very quiet on the case? Is it the agency that is supposed to stop such leaky pools, right? Or did somebody throw get lucky too?

Yap pushing for expansion of areas planted to tobacco

By Amy R. Remo

AGRICULTURE SECRETARY ARTHUR C. YAP has urged the National Tobacco Administration to pursue programs aimed at expanding the areas planted to tobacco, citing the huge demand in the local market.

"Last year, local cigarette manufacturers imported as much as 7.1.8 million kilos of tobacco leaves while the country's tobacco sector produced only 45 million kilos," Yap said during the celebration of NTA's 25th anniversary.

In the first quarter of 2007, total tobacco production was valued at P735 million, up 42.5% from the P5.15 million in the same period last year.

"You have to note that tobacco companies are importing more than what we are producing. You are accountable to your next importer shown... 45,000 leaf farmers, whose livelihood depend on this trade," the agriculture secretary told the NTA.

"I don't believe that these manufacturers really want to source their raw materials elsewhere if they can buy it here," added Yap.

He also asked the NTA to concentrate not only on production but also on the provision of the infrastructure and technology needed to ensure the sector's sustainable growth.

To complete the supply chain, wider market access or selling services should be provided to farmers. If farmers can sell more, the financial incentive can consequently urge them to plant and produce more.

Yap said the NTA has its priority should be to ensure that "farmers are earning much more than they did 20 years back when the NTA was put up."

"So, the NTA does not exist for tobacco alone neither does it exist for tobacco manufacturing companies. NTA exists for the protection of the interest and livelihood of the tobacco farmers," he said.

He said the NTA should focus on raising farmers' income from tobacco production, ensuring more livelihood and jobs for them, tapping the huge potential of the local market, expanding production areas, and ensuring that the quality of tobacco is at par with those exported.

Yap also said the NTA needs to reboot its resources on more important projects to address the needs of farmers in terms of planting, harvesting, drying and curing.

"The NTA should also tap and consult the private sector for the business side of the trade. I believe they would be willing to help develop tobacco industry if needed," he added.

AIG PhilAm launches 5-year certificates of deposit

AIG PHILAM SAVINGS BANK INC. (AIG) it had launched its maiden issue of long-term negotiable certificates of deposit (LTNCDs), making it the first thrift bank to issue this instrument in the domestic market.

The bank's plan is to offer up to P1 billion worth of LTNCDs over a 12-month period but has been approved by the securities licensed by Philippine and the Monetary Board. It intends to offer a minimum of P1 billion worth of the first series of LTNCDs in July 2007. The funds to be raised will be used to finance the bank's long-term assets expansion.

"Our stable operational profitability and affiliation with American International Group (AIG) and Philamlife will be the key success factors for the LT-NCDs' issue offer," AIG PhilAm Savings Bank president and CEO Jesus Bueno said.

"Our LTNCD will pay interest on a monthly basis, unlike other LTNCDs of recent offering. Furthermore, it is tax-free if held until maturity while providing liquidity to the investor due to its negotiability in the secondary market," Bueno added.

The LTNCDs will mature in five years and can mature and will bear a fixed interest rate of 7.20 percent per year.

Consumers interested to see a bond deposit hybrid product, the LTNCDs are covered by the Philippine Deposit Insurance Corp. up to P250,000 per depositor. Like a bond, the LTNCD is a long-term investment that may be negotiated before maturity.

The bank has appointed Standard Chartered Bank as the arranger, registrar, paying agent and market-maker for AIG PhilAm Savings Bank. SCB and Orix rep Financial Services & Investment Brokerage Phils. are the designated selling agents.

Imports fell 3.4% in May to $4.45B

From page B1

Fresh reports earlier reported to have reached $30.62 billion for the first five months of the year, the country's last most of trade hit a deficit of $4.08 billion during the period.

The decline in imports from January to May raised doubts whether the country could still meet the government's official target of a 10-percent export growth in 2007.

Jonathan Rowles, market strategist for Banco de Oro, said it was still too early to tell whether or not exports would meet the government's growth target.

He said the drop in imports could have been due to rising commodity prices in the world market and was a natural consequence of higher demand in the developed countries.

"You have rising commodity prices in the international market so it should have affected demand for certain goods, but it's too early to be alarmed. The government's 10-percent export growth target is still a fighting target," he said.

The electronics industry earlier said it was expecting exports, which posted a 7.7 percent year-on-year growth in the first five months, to be higher in the second half with the expected rise in demand for consumer electronics.

The second-biggest imports for May were mineral fuels, lubricants and related materials ($796 million), transport equipment ($200.24 million), industrial machinery and equipment ($134.73 million), textile yarn, fabrics and related materials ($117.87 million), cereals and cereal preparations ($116.31 million), chemicals ($80.83 million), iron and steel ($69.87 million), plastics ($69.01 million), and dairy products ($66.44 million).

The biggest source of imports was still the United States, which accounted for $595.82 million.

Other top import sources were Singapore ($462.46 million), Japan ($411.8.68 million), China ($325.43 million), Taiwan ($301.01 million), Saudi Arabia ($280.5 million), Ireland ($220.83 million), South Korea ($206.76 million), Thailand ($190.29 million) and Hong Kong ($175.9 million).

Michelle V. Rosca

Jollibee ...

From page B1

to a higher level of quality and efficiency thereby improving the lives of Filipino consumers, particularly those from the lower income households," Jollibee said.

Jollibee said it would provide more consistency in food quality, better hygiene, sanitation, nutrition, food safety and better restaurant conditions at food prices the ordinary Filipino worker can afford.

The Jollibee group of companies operates the country's biggest food service network with 1,300 stores in the Philippines as of June 30.

This figure is broken down into 585 Jollibee stores, 367 Chowking stores, 227 Greenwich stores, 103 Red Ribbon stores and 35 Delifrance stores.

Asia shares slip on US housing woes, strong yen

Wall Street's drop casts pall over region's markets

FLAGS of the 10-member Shangri-La Partners of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations flutter as a worker rounds out the Philippine International Convention Center, the venue for the 40th ASEAN Ministerial Meeting and the ASEAN Regional Forum. Thousands of police are mobilized as senior delegates for the ministerial meetings July 29-Aug. 5. AP

SINGAPORE—ASIAN SHARES FELL on Wednesday, with exporters such as Toyota Motor Corp. hit by the rising yen and mounting concerns about the health of the US economy, while falling oil prices weighed on energy stocks.

The yen hit a 2½ month high against the dollar as investors bailed out of stocks and risky trades it mistrusted by borrowing in the Japanese currency.

The rush to safety buoyed government bonds and kept gold near 33-week highs.

European stock markets were also set for another rough day with UK's FTSE 100 index seen down 0.5 percent, Germany's DAX 0.9 to 1.0 percent weaker and France's CAC 40 0.8 to 1 percent lower, according to London bookmakers.

Japan's Nikkei fell 0.6 percent to it's lowest close in a month, tracking heavy losses on Wall Street, where poor results from Sallmae Co. and a key mortgage industry regulator fuelled about the broader fall-out from the week's housing sector.

Lenses fell 2 percent and Toyota 1.3 percent, while oil shares HSBC fell almost 3 percent on the back of falling crude prices.

South Korea bucked the downtrend and its benchmark rose 0.6 percent in a reward close after Moody's Investors Service raised the country's rating, underscoring the optimistic outlook for Asia's fourth largest economy.

MSCI's index of Asia Pacific stocks excluding Japan fell 0.4 percent after three consecutive record highs, with Wall Street's worst one-day drop since mid-March casting a pall over the region's markets.

Hong Kong dipped 0.3 percent, the Australian benchmark lost 1.1 percent, Singapore fell 0.6 percent, while Taiwan erased early losses to trade virtually flat.

The dollar regained some ground against the euro and hovered around $1.2808 after hitting another all-time low of $1.3052 on Tuesday.

But the US currency dogged by persistent worries about US credit market problems, sank as low as 113.80 yen—the lowest since mid-May before edging back above 120 yen.

"There are more risk aversion moves as higher market volatility is making investors nervous," said Tohru Suzuki, chief currency manager at JP Morgan Chase bank in Tokyo.

"That is prompting investors to square short yen positions."

Volatile share and currency markets and heightened uncertainty about the performance of the world's biggest economy bolstered safe-haven investments.

Japanese and US government bond futures hit seven week highs. Gold hit an 11 week high in late New York trade before giving up some of the gains to Asia.

In a sign of poor sentiment, financial markets brushed off assurances from two top Federal Reserve officials that the US economy was not at risk of a credit crunch despite problems in high-risk mortgage investments.

Instead, investors will look to US existing home sales data due on Wednesday and new homes sales due on Thursday, worried that persistent housing market weakness will drag consumer spending and hurt other sectors of the economy. Reuters

China, Asean on way to finalizing trade pact

SINGAPORE—SOUTHEAST ASIAN NATIONS and China are on track to establishing a free trade pact with just a number of details to be resolved out, a senior ASEAN official said Monday.

"We are on track on (the) ASEAN-China" free trade area, said Ong Keng Yong, secretary-general of the 10-member Association of Southeast Asian Nations.

Trade between China and ASEAN, expanding by nearly 40 percent a year, is likely to exceed $200 billion a year by 2008, two years before the free trade area is due to be established in 2010.

"Some services still (need) to be ironed out," Ong said, without elaborating.

He said negotiations on how the agreement will cover investments between the China and ASEAN will hopefully be completed by the end of the year.

ASEAN is a key market for Chinese manufactures, as well as a source for energy, rubber, minerals and other natural resources.

ASEAN's members are Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam.

Those countries range from some of Southeast Asia's most affluent to some of its poorest. AP

South Korean economy grew 4.9% in second quarter

SEOUL, SOUTH KOREA—SOUTH Korea's economy grew sharply in the second quarter, expanding at its fastest rate in a year, fuelled by strong output of semiconductors, ships and automobiles, the Bank of Korea said Wednesday.

Gross domestic product expanded 4.9 percent in the three months ending June 30 from the same period last year, the central bank said in a statement. That was up from the 4 percent rise in the first quarter and the highest since growth of 5.1 percent in the second quarter last year.

Compared to the previous quarter, the economy grew 1.7 percent, the fastest quarterly pace since it recorded the same rate in the fourth quarter of 2005.

Separately, Moody's Investors Service raised South Korea's long-term foreign currency and local currency ratings to A2 from A3, its 11th upgrade level and first range above "mid" status.

Moody's, which last raised South Korea's sovereign credit ratings in March 2002, cited the country's sound fiscal policies, solid economy and easing international tensions surrounding North Korea for the action, which was widely expected.

"GDP was strong," said Oh Suk-tae, economist for Citibank in Seoul. "The main contributors were manufacturing. He attributed the better-than-expected numbers largely to a recovery in South Korea's semiconductor industry, home to two of the world's biggest memory chip makers, Samsung Electronics Co. and Hynix Semiconductor Inc.

Oh said the quarter-on-quarter figure corresponds to annualized growth of 7 percent, the highest since 11.2 percent in the fourth quarter of 2003.

The manufacturing sector grew 3.6 percent in the second quarter, rebounding from a contraction of 0.9 percent in the first quarter.

South Korea's exports grew 5.2 percent, nearly doubling from the first quarter's 2.7 percent expansion.

"The acceleration in growth was mainly due to the strength of petrochemicals, industrial machinery and ships," the bank said.

South Korea leads the global shipbuilding industry. Hyundai Heavy Industries Co., for example, is the world's biggest shipbuilder.

The growth figures surpassed the Bank of Korea's own estimates. The bank said earlier this month that it expected growth of 4.7 percent on year and 1.4 percent on quarter.

Economists surveyed by Dow Jones Newswires on average expected 4.8 percent growth on year and 1.3 percent on quarter. AP

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Amazon.com profit soars on strong sales of books

SEATTLE—INVESTORS WENT ON an Amazon.com buy, dropping spree after the web retailer said its second-quarter profit more than tripled, thanks to strong sales of books, music and electronics worldwide.

Wall Street may also have been cheering a slowdown in spending on technology after several years of heavy investment.

Before the announcement, shares of Amazon sank $2.49, or 4.5 percent, to close at $52.50. They skyrocketed $14.76, or 21 percent, to $67.95 in after hours electronic trading.

The major gains on a day when Wall Street pulled back sharply as investors dealt with disappointing earnings reports and rising concerns about the mortgage market. The Dow Jones industrials shed more than 200 points.

Amazon's quarterly earnings climbed to $79 million (66 cents) from $32 million, or 5 cents per share during the same period last year. Sales jumped 30 percent to $2.69 billion (on real, $6 billion) from $2.14 billion in the year ago quarter.

Both measures topped Wall Street's expectations. Analysts had forecast a profit of 16 cents per share on $2.61 billion (on real, $5 billion) in sales, according to Thomson Financial survey.

"In you want on the revenue line and work your way down the income statement, I think it was a pretty all around nice beat," said Tom Gonnan, an analyst at Modesto Wright-Sagen. "They're in a sweet spot in terms of adding selection, adding convenience and lowering those prices, and I think it's starting to pay off for them." AP

Worldwide, revenue from electronics and general merchandise improved 56 percent to $976 million (euro761.22 million), while sales of books, music and other media category products grew 27 percent to $1.83 billion (euro1.31 billion). The weaker-than-a weaker dollar helped improve sales slightly. AP

EIB SAVINGS BANK, INC.
Cebu South Road, Barangay Bulacao, Talisay Cebu City

STATEMENT OF CONDITION
(Head Office and Branches)
As of June 30, 2007

ASSETS

		AMOUNT
Cash and Cash Items		241,588
Due from Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas		1,081,781
Due from Other Banks		71,846,423
Loans to Customers, Financial Institutions (Net)		66,545,194
Investment Securities (Net)		16,425,000
Bank Premises, Furniture, Fixtures, & Equipment (Net)		1,000,000
Other Assets (Net)		
Others		824,000
TOTAL ASSETS	P	98,965,786

LIABILITIES

Savings Deposits		1,115,000
Time Deposits		1,047,000
Unearned Income and Other Deferred Credits		272,000
Other Liabilities		1,000,786
TOTAL LIABILITIES	P	4,000,000

CAPITAL ACCOUNTS

Capital Stock	P	80,000,000
Surplus		14,000,000
Undivided Profits		1,000,000
TOTAL CAPITAL ACCOUNTS	P	94,965,786
TOTAL LIABILITIES AND CAPITAL ACCOUNTS	P	98,965,786

BOARD OF DIRECTORS
PRINCIPAL OFFICER

$74.75 A BARREL
Oil falls as rise in output seen

SINGAPORE—OIL PRICES SLID FOR a fourth day on Wednesday, on forecasts of higher refinery production in the United States that would ease worries over fuel supplies during peak summer demand.

London Brent crude currently seen as more representative of the world market, fell 33 cents to $74.75 a barrel by early yesterday afternoon, after tumbling $1.70 on Tuesday. US crude for September traded 20 cents lower at $75.31.

US gasoline stocks were rising by 400,000 barrels last week as refinery usage increased sharply through strong summer demand is likely to have limited the potential for a larger build, a Reuters survey of analysts showed.

"The recent return of some US refineries from unplanned outages is a bearish element," said Harry Tchilinguirian, oil analyst at BNP Paribas.

"While US gasoline imports in the week's data are likely to stay subdued, higher refinery runs and more blending should lift domestic supply."

US crude stocks were seen falling 1.3 million barrels last week in the government data due later on Wednesday, dropping for the third week running, but this would still leave stocks about 5 percent above the level this time last year.

The Brent market's losses from an 11 month high above $77 last week have occurred a near two-month rally that came on speculative buying and worries over summer gasoline supplies, but OPEC has an far resisted pumping additional crude.

OPEC's second biggest producer Iran said on Sunday the exporter group, which agreed to cut output last year as prices were sliding, would ramp up output if necessary.

This follows similar remarks from OPEC President Mohammed al-Hamli who said on Sunday the cartel was worried high oil prices might hurt the world economy.

Producers from non-OPEC Russia will remain steady until 2020, its Economy Ministry said on Tuesday, broadly confirming the outlook by the International Energy Agency.

The ministry said in its long-term economic outlook that it expected production from Russia, the world's second largest oil exporter after Saudi Arabia, to level off at 10.6 million barrels per day between 2015 and 2020. Reuters

BUSINESS

Banking system better, stronger, BSP says

By Daxim L. Lucas

THE LOCAL BANKING SYSTEM HAS become significantly stronger in recent years, due to a large degree to the corporate governance reforms adopted by the industry as well as those imposed by regulators.

According to Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP) Governor Amando M. Tetangco Jr., almost all financial indicators of the banking industry show a marked improvement over the last decade.

"The banking system is more resilient and better with the financial sector reforms," he said, speaking before members of the Makati Institute of the Philippines Inc.

The BSP chief pointed out that banks' regulatory imposed corporate governance reforms, reform on equity of the banking system stood at an average of only 5 percent.

"As of May 2007, average return on equity shows double-digit growth," he said.

Tetangco said the bad loans and bad assets of the banking system also stood at 16 percent and 17 percent, respectively, at the height of the 1997 East Asian financial crisis.

"The figure came down to a bad loan ratio of 3.6 percent and a bad asset ratio of 6.0 percent in recent years, but dropped further to below 4 percent with the adoption of corporate governance reforms.

The BSP chief said that, to a large degree, the financial crisis of the previous decade was brought about by poor governance systems in the banking community—a situation that the central bank is now addressing.

"Weak corporate governance has been identified as one of the main reasons for the Asian crisis," he said. "We had a concentration of risks and poor credit policies."

Recent BSP rules hope to prevent a repeat of the crisis by ensuring that risks taken on by banks are either capped or backed up by adequate capital.

He said the central bank had also moved to boost the capitalization of the banking system for it to be better able to withstand financial shocks.

In 2001, the average capital adequacy ratio (CAR)—the proportion of owners' equity to the amount of risky assets—of the local banking system stood at only 14.2 percent.

Today, however, the average CAR stands at 18.1 percent, well above the international standard of 10 percent.

Average return on assets of the banking system has also risen from 1.3 percent in 2001 to 1.6 percent as of the latest available figures.

"The bigger challenge now is in sustainability," Tetangco said. ■ with report from AP

Sustainability is new challenge, Tetangco says

To date, however, 94 percent of the over 8,000 bank directors in the country have already undergone training.

HGL SPOKESPERSON Hesser Lepma III (right) points to a map of Semirara Island that shows the contested property, as company owner Manny Lim (left) looks on. ALEX LOPEZ

Firm seeks to recover property from Semirara

By Elizabeth Sanchez-Lacson

CATTLE BREEDER HGL DEVELOPMENT Corp. is keen on taking back its 307 hectare pasture lease property allegedly encroached by Semirara Mining Corp.

In a press conference yesterday, HGL said it had a 50-year land grazing lease agreement which was obtained in 1966 from the then Ministry of Natural Resources and Development. The lease agreement allowed HGL to occupy and graze cattle on the subject property for 50 years, or from 1966 to Dec. 15, 2005. The property sits next to that of Semirara Mining on Semirara Island in Antique.

In a letter to the Philippine Stock Exchange, HGL corporate secretary Lourdes Madrali said Semirara had sought permission from and was allowed by HGL to use the property for the "limited purpose" of constructing an access road to its mining site in Semirara Island.

Madrali said that contrary to this in agreement with HGL, Semirara expanded the concrete road, erected several buildings, including administrative offices and warehouses for its employees, conducted excavation and blasting activities near the subject property and allegedly "dispossessed HGL of the subject property."

In 2003, HGL filed a case against Semirara with the regional trial court of Antique to recover possession of the property. This case eventually became the subject of the opposite petition and was elevated to the Supreme Court.

HGL alleged that Semirara had failed to disclose to corporate regulators that last December 2006, the Supreme Court lifted a temporary restraining order with the denial of Semirara's petition for certiorari. This, the company said, effectively means that Semirara could now be forced through court processes to surrender possession of the property to HGL.

HGL spokesperson and lawyer Hesser Lepma III of Lim Ocampo Lepma Lara offices said HGL has "incurred grave and irreparable injuries" from being dispossessed of its property. Lepma, however, admitted that the total income given to Semirara was not covered by any written contracts.

HGL's letter to the PSE and the Securities and Exchange Commission revised Semirara's failure to comply with disclosure rules, Lepma said.

The PSE's compliance group, which owns Semirara, could not immediately comment on the matter when contacted yesterday.

More Koreans retiring in Philippines

By Ruxand IV. Dorango

GOLFERS AND STUDENTS ARE NOT the only Koreans coming to the Philippines, statistics say, too.

Figures from the government's retirement and benefits agencies showed that since 1987, 1,233 Koreans have availed themselves of the Philippine Retirement Authority's special retiree program.

These "long-stayer" nationals opted to spend a part of their retirement money here in exchange for residency as well as a lower cost of living.

Over the past 20 years, at least 33 South Koreans retired a month have been moving in the Philippines.

South Koreans are the third largest retiree group in the country, after the mainland Chinese (3,050 as of June 2007) and the Taiwanese (1,241).

Officials observed that the top reasons why South Koreans choose to retire here was their search for schools for their children.

Another reason seen is just up here with all of their own or for their companies.

According to the United Korean Community Association, there are 100,000 Korean residents in the country, aside from tourists who numbered some 515,000 in 2006.

URCA president Young Baek Lee said the influx of Koreans residents and visitors—along with their investments and spending money—has been a good source of income for the Filipinos.

"Aside from supplementing (Philippines') national investments, the majority of the value-added from Korean investments would remain here by way of taxes, salaries, rentals and others, as well as profit share for local shareholders in Korean firms," Lee said.

Still, Korean presence has caused some friction with the local populace due to what Lee described as the "misunderstood and ill-mannered few" among them.

Also, Lee said the Koreans have often been fair game to unscrupulous people like extortionists, including government agents.

The Korean Embassy has launched a "spate of harassment and inappropriate arrests" of Koreans in the past three weeks.

Hong Sungsong, Consul General and deputy chief of mission, denied "mass arrests" in the past three weeks that involved visits of supposed immigration agents to Korean citizens very late at night or even in places of worship.

"It was like living in the Soviet Union," Hong said. "They (agents) came at 11 p.m. or sometimes when the Koreans are praying in the final-draw temple."

Security Bank positive on Mindanao, sees growth

By Dennis Santos and Judy Quiroz
Inquirer Mindanao

DAVAO CITY—THE BOARD OF Security Bank Corp. held its first meeting outside Metro Manila here last Tuesday.

Alberto Villarosa, SBC president and chief executive officer, said the decision of the board has been showed that the bank was bullish on Mindanao.

"We recognize the growth of the Mindanao economy in the last three years, and we intend to contribute to this development by opening more of our products and services to the untapped Mindanao markets," Villarosa said.

He cited local and foreign investment coming into Mindanao as one of the reasons why SBC was optimistic about the island's economy.

Villarosa said during the meeting that SBC had mapped out its expansion plans for Mindanao.

Rudy Cadlu, SBC vice president for the consumer lending division, said in a briefing at the Manila Polo Club here that the key thrust the bank planned to expand in include Davao, General Santos, Cagayan de Oro and Zamboanga.

Currently, there are eight SBC branches in Mindanao, four of which are in Davao City.

"We want to expand in areas where there is money because we want our operations to be viable," Cadlu said.

He said the 56-year old bank would aggressively campaign for consumer lending, where it considered SBC's current growth drivers, as the primary product and service it would offer under the expansion plan.

Andy Soon, consumer lending and housing loans, Cadlu said that the bank also sees bright prospects in auto-motive financing.

"Of the P71 billion in earnings from auto loans nationwide, a big chunk of it comes from Mindanao," Cadlu said.

The growing number of Overseas Filipino Workers (OFWs) largely contributed to the rosy auto loans industry, according to Cadlu.

Ben Gatlo said SBC was also looking at micro-lending as part of its expansion plans in Mindanao.

PESONet, BIXnet, SBC senior vice president, said that even if the middle class remained one of the two major markets of the bank, the bank was opportunistic about finding a niche in other markets.

"We want to emphasize on this possibility," he said.

Jason Ang, SBC Visayas and Mindanao regional head, said the bank was also looking at offering higher yield investment opportunities for Mindanao clients through trust funds.

"We want to educate people in Mindanao on bigger investment opportunities aside from the usual time deposits," he said.

LCDs, tires top Clark zone's exports

By Ronnie Cesqa
Inquirer General Luzon

CLARK FREEPORT—LIQUID CRYSTAL DISplay (LCD) maker Nation Philippines and tire manufacturer Yokohama Tire Philippines were the biggest exporters in separate reports to Clark Development Corp. showed.

In June alone, Nissin shipped out $19.3 million worth of LCDs, making its export value since 2004 to more than $500 million, according to the CDC reports.

It brought out $9.82 million worth of products from January to May 2007.

Yokohama's exports reached $14.9 million for June, adding to the $67.8 million worth of tires sold in the five months.

The other top exporters in June included garments firms Imari Shirts Philippines, $5.9 million, Cosmos Garments, $2.7 million, and electronic firm Land E Industries Phils., $1.9 million.

Exports from top 20 Clark-based exporters reached $93.9 million in June, CDC president Levi Lanz said, citing the reports from CDC's corporate operations department.

The 20 exporting firms have sold overseas more than $520 million worth of goods from January to May 2007.

With that trend in export value, Clark might surpass the $1.4 billion output in 2006, Lanz said.

The Department of Trade and Industry has considered the export firms in Clark as "among the prime economic boosters in Central Luzon."

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Cagayan seaport expansion up

By Ma. Cecilia Rodriguez
Inquirer Mindanao

CAGAYAN DE ORO CITY—PHIL PHILIPPINE Ports Authority has completed the expansion of the biggest port in Mindanao here, which cost the government some P220 million.

Isidro Bandalan, engineering head of the Project Management Office here, said the rehabilitation of Berths 1 to 5 was finished last last year and the construction of additional storage will be completed this month.

"Now, we can answer to the needs of increasing vessel shipping lines. The expansion will make way for more efficient movement of cargoes and the turn-around time of the vessels will be lesser," Bandalan said.

In recent expansion has made the Cagayan de Oro seaport the largest seaport in Mindanao.

It covers 22 hectares of solid and reclaimed land at the center of the city, off the shores of Macajalar Bay.

The seaport handles nine international dispatch every month, including cargo lines from the United States, Korea and Japan.

Products such as molasses or raw sugar and bananas are loaded twice a week for export to Japan and Korea.

Petroleum and rice imports from the Middle East also unloaded monthly. Around 30 domestic commercial passenger lines dock at the port.

The development of the Cagayan de Oro seaport is seen by the Arroyo administration as a major boost Mindanao's economy.

7 groups seen bidding for Masinloc

SEVEN GROUPS ARE EXPECTED TO BID for one of the Philippines' most profitable power plants this week as the country tastes its first bidding for multi-billion power privatization plan deals given the government's cash crunch.

The government will close the bidding for the 600-megawatt Masinloc coal-fired power plant at noon today—its second attempt to sell the asset.

Industry sources said the reserve price for the facility could likely be increased to $1688 million-$450 million from last year's $1088 million after the government offered to guarantee the buyer a supply deal which would ensure the plant's profitability.

The asset will guarantee a supply deal for 480 megawatt of Masinloc's average daily load.

The groups likely to submit bids for the plant, located northwest of Manila, were Hanhill Bhd., Isaac Transfield, International Power Plc., Steelcargo, First Gen Corp. and Trans-Asia Power Corp., the sources said.

A previous sale of the Masinloc plant last year fell through due to the land ownership issues and other circumstances led by Mitsubishi-Hanhill failed to make the required downpayment.

Government plans to raise up to $5 billion by selling over 20 power plants and a 25-year license to run the national grid to reduce its budget deficit. Sales have been hampered because the plants did not have supply contracts that would guarantee their profitability.

The Philippines hopes to sell off this year 56 percent of the state agency National Power Corp's generating assets with a total capacity of 4,337 MW, living to 78 percent by 2008.

Aside from the Masinloc sale, seven hydropower plants and three have been no sales yet in 2007. ■ Reuters

LIFESTYLE

THURSDAY FOOD • FRIDAY FASHION & BEAUTY

Pork knuckle for P17? You better believe it!

Old Swiss Inn rolls back the prices of certain items on its menu to what they might have been in 1946 when it first opened

By Linda B. Bohle

JUST HOW GOOD WERE THE old days?

The Swiss Inn chain of restaurants gives you a chance to find out on Aug. 1, as it marks its 61st anniversary and Switzerland's National Day.

Established in 1946 by Swiss national Emil Lenzlinger, Swiss Inn offers the one-evening only Old Swiss Roll back to the 1940s. For this special treat for its customers, the chain is dropping the prices of eight signature dishes (they were on the original menu) to what they had been, more or less, in 1946.

This is only the second year the Swiss Inn group is offering the Price Roll back promo.

Managing director Katrina E. Lenzlinger, whose family brought the original Swiss Inn beside Pure Pork in Manila from London and has since added two more branches, said they decided to offer it last year to mark a mile-stone—their 60th anniversary.

KATRINA E. Lenzlinger, managing director of the Swiss Inn chain

The event was so successful they decided customers have it again this year. Though the prices might not be accurate to the last centavo or peso, they were as close to what they would have been when the restaurant first opened, Lenzlinger said.

"My father said the exchange rate then was $2 to $1. So I researched and made my calculations," she said.

Her parents—P35 for Grand Roll, P17 for Ginger (pork knuckle), P21 for Wienerschnitzel, P11 for Veal Sausage, P11 for Pork Sausage, P11 for Rösthäg, P25 for Peppersteak and P35 for Prime Rib.

With prices like these, how will Swiss Inn meet customers?

"Well, it will be strictly by reservations only on Aug. 1. With the huge popularity of last year's promo, Lenzlinger said they now would have two sittings—at 5 p.m. and 9 p.m.—to accommodate more people.

Strictly by reservation

With so customers will be admitted if there are tables available, but they will have to pay regular rates for what they order.

Lenzlinger added there were added considerations to the promo aside from advance reservations. Dishes and drinks not on the roll-back list, like desserts, would be regularly priced, reservations will be on cash basis only, there would be no takeout, and orders would have to be made one dish at a time.

FOOD, 12

SWISS Inn fresh corned beef is another traditional favorite.

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CHILDREN'S CHOICES IN FOOD are ruled by what they see. Their interest in food can be piqued by colors, shapes and textures.

Recipes from Supermarket asked chef Pido Arellano to create these bean recipes:

Open-faced Sandwiches

2 eggs
2 tbsp mayonnaise
½ tsp mustard
Salt and pepper to taste
Slice of bread
Carrots, thinly sliced spirals or strips, or coarsely grated cheese, for the "hair"

Pitas
Slice of ham
Slices of olive
Red bell pepper, sliced into a cross for the "mouth"

Boil eggs in water until hard. Peel eggs and mash. Add mayonnaise, mustard, salt and pepper. Set aside.

Prepare parts of the face: cut rounds from the slice of the ham with round cookie cutters.

Spread the egg salad on one side of the bread slice. Place the two sliced pieces of ham to form the eyes. Then place in pea on each round to form the iris of the eye.

Place an olive below the eyes for the nose then place the red bell pepper slice to make the mouth.

Place the carrot slices on top of the eyes to make the hair.

Breaded Sushi Sandwiches

4 cucumber strips
1 ripe mango, flesh sliced into strips
2-3 crabsticks
¼ c Japanese mayonnaise
2 slices of bread, flattened with a rolling pin

OPEN FACED Sandwiches

BREADED Sushi Sandwiches

2 eggs, beaten
2 c Japanese bread crumbs
Oil for frying
Spread mayonnaise on each slice of bread.

Lay two slices each of cucumber, mango and crabsticks on the bottom slice of bread. Roll up the bread and gently press to seal.

Cut each roll into four equal pieces.

Dip each slice into the beaten egg then roll in bread crumbs.

Fry in hot oil until the bread crumbs turn golden brown.

Beef Quesadillas

2 cups flour
½ c grated cheddar cheese
2 tbsp oil
1/4 lb ground beef
½ c tomato-style spaghetti sauce
Salt and pepper to taste
½ c butter

Prepare meat. Heat oil in a skillet then sauté ground beef. Add spaghetti sauce then season with salt and pepper. Set aside.

Spread butter on each side of the tortilla.

Place tortilla in a hot nonstick skillet. Place on one half then sprinkle ground cheese and cooked beef on the tortilla, leaving at least a half inch margin on every side.

Cover the filled tortilla with the other tortilla and, with a cutter, press the ingredients together until they are heated by the melted cheese.

Turn the tortilla over and let the other tortilla brown for a minute.

Cut the sandwiched tortillas into wedges and serve.

Pantaleo's With Supermarkets are in Ayala Center, Makati; Rockwell Power Plant Mall, Gateway Mall, Cubao; Shangri-La Plaza, Edsa; Greenhills, San Juan; Festival Plaza, Northpark, Magallanes, Bacoor; Robinsons Road and Cyberchase Pilla.

Dining Out

Late afternoon delights

LUMAL SARIJEN makes merienda a delightful affair with such choices as Lomi, Cue-pao, Pinki Mihaya, Spider Cakes. Although open 100 percent, it has its available, the restaurant has also an updated menu, like Oriental Garden Toasted Rice, Crunchy Garden Roll and Lumal Sarijen Special Fried Rice. Lumal Sarijen has branches in Banawe, Quezon City, tel. 711-0266, 7-17-90-9; and Cubao, QC, on E. Rodriguez Jr. Avenue, 913-0191.

BISTRO American Bar and Restaurant features Onion Toss, made from quality and fresh onions. It is flavored and freshly garnished, then served with fresh salsa, cheese and sizzle-dressing. Bistro has two branches: at 23 Polaris Business Center, South Triangle, Diliman, QC; 361, Power Plant Mall, Rockwell Center, Makati; 371, The Podium, 12th Avenue, Bridgetown Center, Mandaluyong; 381, Promenade, Greenhills, San Juan; 241, Gateway Mall, Araneta Center; 251, South wing, SM Mall of Asia, Pasay; 491, Robinsons Galleria; and 351, The Block, SM City, New Dasmariñas, Cavite. Call 927-1500, 890-3876, 687-6000, 729-2015, 997-3611 or 046-0000.

TEXAS ROADHOUSE GRILL serves 10 ounces of 21 Ribeye Steak with a choice of two sidings (fresh vegetables, mashed potato, steamed rice, French fries). Roadhouse also steak grilled the way you like it — rare, medium rare, medium, medium well and well done. The restaurant also offers the pan shops, seafood, soups, salads, etc. Texas Roadhouse Grill is at Boardwalk 1, Bonifacio High Street, Bonifacio Global City, Taguig. Call 856-1641-44.

SCRUMPTIOUS FISH & CHIPS

Dubbed as the popular takeout food, fish and chips have been a must-have in most diners. But nowadays you also see big fish and chips rarely come. Cafe Adriatico offers you what Fish and Chips should be. Enjoy the flavorful taste of Kid Shot, ripe taro dipped in an ale batter and deep fried. It comes with a hefty serving of French fries with toasty peas perfectly combined with homestyle remoulade sauce, making this delicacy one exciting treat. Cafe Adriatico's Seaweed City branch is at Power Circle, Eastwood Citywalk 1, Call 421-9649 or text 0917-4BWCITY.

GUILTLESS TREATS

Sugarless offers guilt-free treats. The restaurant specializes in sugar-free, low-carb and low-fat cuisine that are not short on flavors. Sugarless's favorite is Ultimate Temptation, pure Belgian chocolate delight. Other popular choices are Lust Temptation, chocolate cake with truffle filling and ganache frosting; Cravings Custard Cake; Carrot Cake; New York Cheesecake; Strawberry Shortcake; Mango Cream Cake; Orange Cream Cake; Triple Chocolate Mousse; Cookie Crumble Mousse, and the Kahlua-Banana Tiramisu. Sugarless is at Westgate Alabang, Filinvest Corporate City. Call 772-0119.

CRUSTACEAN'S Grand Singaporean Seafood Buffet is offered every Friday-Sunday, 11 a.m.-2 p.m. and 6-9 p.m. at its The Podium branch. Its new station features Portuguese Chicken Curry, Thai Fish Pancake, Beef Rendang, Battered Oatmeal Prawns, Char Tow Kueh, Claypot Chicken Rice, Cold Shanghainese Tofu, Fish Head Curry Soup, Hue Mee, Hokkien Fried Noodle, Thai Fish Pancake, Prawns Salad, Thai Stuffed Eggplant, Thai Vegetable, Mixed Sambal Seafood.

PALOMA Modern Spanish Bistro offers Spanish dishes by chef JA Ventura such as Manchego Cheese Triangles, Datiles Salpicao, Smoked Salmon on Black Rice and Braised Crispy Quail. The Pardo Paloma, one of the restaurant's bestsellers, is a feast of interesting and unusual flavors. For boats, sometimes dinner, there's the Orange and Pine Nut Salad and Calamares Salad with balsamic vinaigrette. Other must-try dishes are the Cannelloni with Wild Mushroom Duo. The restaurant is at 1/F Shangri-La Plaza Mall. Call 913-0878.

THE CONSUMER
Marivenia Velasco-Giron

Store tricks to make you buy more

By Linda Bolido

IF YOU WONDER WHY despite resolving to buy only one or two items, you often end up with a cartload of goods when you go shopping, MSN Money may have the answer.

It says "department stores are no savvy of techniques (grocery stores use many of the same tactics) to get you to pick up those items."

Though separately each technique is not very strong, put together they can be powerful.

Here are some of those:

1. Shopping carts are placed by the entrance. Though most customers intend to buy only an item or two, a shopping cart makes it psychologically easy to toss in unneeded items because there is plenty of space to fill.

2. With desirable department far from the entrance, shoppers walk by a lot of other goods to find the item they want.

There is a good likelihood they will see something they do not necessarily need but will buy anyway.

3. Impulse-oriented items are near the checkout. Magazines, candies, even beverages.

MSN Money says this is because people standing in line may want some entertainment so they check out the magazines, or they may want something to pass the time like chewing on a candy.

4. The more expensive are, some of a product are placed at eye level. Smaller items are placed at eye level, so shoppers are there first. Bulk options, which usually the more heavy deals, are on the bottom shelves.

5. Items that are not on sale are displayed as though they are, without actually using the word "sale." A product would be put in a separate cart with a huge sign displaying the price. The cart is the same but because of the way the product is displayed, shoppers are misled into thinking they are getting a better deal.

6. Commodity items, such as soda, are surrounded by non-commodity items, like shirts and jeans. On the way to the sodas, a consumer goes through all the other displays and will just be tempted to buy other things.

7. Widely packaged items of necessity with less visibly packaged items. Of course, those with fancy packaging are more expensive.

Putting the expensive "must" side by side with the cheaper "ugly duckling" sometimes increases the chances of the pricier item being bought.

8. As more aisles are not designed for human eye racing, shoppers have to stop every so often to avoid mess-ups or three-car collisions.

MSN Money says stores are designed to maximize the number of steps shoppers make, aisles only big enough for two cars, colorful and attractive layouts, escalators and sample vendors.

It says even if the shopper is not conscious of it, every time he/she stops, it increases the chances of having something put into the cart.

9. Staple items are placed in the middle of aisles, nonessential and unexpected items near the end. Shoppers who enter an aisle to get a "staple" item will have to go by the more expensive stuff earlier — on the way to and on the way out, increasing the likelihood that they will be noticed.

10. MSN Money says prices are chosen to make comparison (mathematics difficult. "Instead of selling the 200-ounce detergent for $6 and the 200-ounce detergent for $11 [making it easier to figure out the better deal], they sell the 100-ounce for $5.99," it says.

Feedback

A reader complained about "unethical MLM (multi-level marketing) agents."

Someone called "offering" him a job. The reader told the caller he was not looking for a job but the guy said his office is ordered a six-figure salary.

"He said an American company was building a town here... and was looking for investors. Naturally, three-years meant results are curious..."

The e-mail sender agreed to meet the caller. Getting to the venue early, he decided to check out the "office." What he saw made him conclude it was a MLM set-up and his caller a MLM distributor.

What you got his good eyes, after he told the caller he was not interested in the job, the guy told him: "If your minds not open to it, then you shouldn't have come" before banging up.

The reader went further, "Typing in my [short] telling me off like I was the one who made [those false claims]..."

He said, "It's one thing to knowingly accept a proposition. Burning all information [and] then [it's] another thing [if the person making the proposition] intentionally misrepresents facts or withholds important details..."

Responding to his complaint, Iris Gale assures him that the company respects "the highest ethical standards" of its distributors.

"We continue to educate our distributors on this culture and commitment to refrain and investigate," it says.

Its message says it will immediately address the problem and take the necessary steps to prevent it from happening again.

Send letters to The Consumer (Lifestyle Section, Philippine Daily Inquirer, Chino Roces Ave. cor. Makati and Ayala Ave., Makati), or e-mail feedback@inquirer.com.ph.

Pork knuckle for P17? You better believe it!

Turn to page A13

THE OLD Swiss inn has been a favorite after-work hangout of businessmen and professionals in the Pasay-Baclaran area.

Of course, customers would also have to pay the other add-ons—rather added fee and service charge.

Regular customers who reserve for long, I also assure me whenever discounts they may be entitled to.

Lincoln's assured customers they could bring their kids if they wanted to. The new branch is a family place in the 1940s, so it is all right in those whole families."

He advised those wanting to make reservations to call directly the branch of their choice. The original Swiss Inn on Roxas Street beside Dizon Park (525-6729, 521-0983, 521-0984 loc 113 and 331) sits about 30. Old Swiss Inn at Somerset Olympia, Makati Avenue in Makati City (8-180098, 8-180211, 8995855, 8-219130 loc 311 and 331) sits 60; and Swiss Inn BGH Mezzanine, Commerce cor. Madrigal Avenue, Alabang (8695228, 8993342, 7720053 24 loc 110 and 120) also sits 60.

FUNCTION room of the old restaurant is set up for a get-down mood.

KITCHEN RESCUE
Reggie Aspiras

Romancing the (pizza) stone

PLEASE HELP I BOUGHT A PIZZA stone years ago and, up to now, it is just in my kitchen cabinet. I was never successful with it in my dream, being a bachelor, to make pizza. My family just loves thin-crust pizzas! You can help me make them very happy. Come to my rescue!

GEORGINA

If I could make them happy, I sure will! So here it is, Georgina, all you need to know to keep your pizza stone going!

Trivia

There types of pizza come from traditional hand-tossed to Roman Pizza, baked directly on a stone; pan pizza, baked on a pizza pan; and thick crust baked directly on a stone.

The Italians have made America enlightened (by tradition of their pizzas by setting guidelines on what constitutes a real Neapolitan, Marinara Margherita, etc.).

Pizzas are based around for the contact to be thin and the sides, thicker.

Why pizza stones are a must

Your oven will never be able to replicate the heat of a real wood-fired pizzeria oven. So the stone helps you achieve this. The heat is crucial to making crispy crusts.

Stones are made of porous materials, usually baked, that absorbs excess moisture from the crust. (Try Sorrelli's, Cook's Exchange, Rustan's for pizza stones.)

To care for your stone:

- Wash stone only with water. Soap ruins it.
- The stone seasoned, meaning the more used, your stone is, the better pizzas it makes.
- Use pizza peels, flour-wood or paddles you see in pizzerias.

To use your stone:

- Put stone in the oven and then preheat.
- Pre-heat oven to 500°F for 20 minutes.
- After 20 minutes, lower the temperature to 400°F to make sure the bottom crust is not burned.
- Crust is ready for pizzas.

Tips that work for me

- This crust—I find this method works best for crispy crusts: First, roll dough, pre-bake for five minutes. After pre-baking, I put my sauce and toppings. I then return the pizza to the oven to finish the process, baking for another five to seven minutes or until my cheeses have melted and have a nice gold crispy.
- Pre-baking also allows you to store your dough for future use. In case the recipe results in more crusts than you can consume in one sitting.
- The richer your ingredients, the richer your pizza. The quality of ingredients is essential in pizza making. Pick the best money can buy.

Here are some of my basic recipes from my pizza days. Hope they work well for you.

Basic Thin-Crust Pizza Dough

1 tbsp instant yeast
2 tsp honey or sugar
1 ½ water
½ c shortening or olive oil (shortening makes it more crispy)
3-4 cups all-purpose flour
2 tsp salt
Olive oil
Cornmeal, for four ingredients and mix well.

Gradually add flour, incorporating and kneading until no longer sticky, at least five minutes.

Depending on humidity, you may or may not have to use all the flour.

When no longer sticky, form into a ball.

Grease bowl with olive oil and put dough.

Cover with cling wrap and leave for an hour to rise to double in bulk.

Punch down dough and divide.

Roll, for this crust, 1/4" thick; think crust, around 1 inch, depending on desired thickness; and for pan pizza about 1-1½ inches.

Proof dough using a fork to even air vents, if making thin crust.

Sprinkle cornmeal on pizza pan/and/or pizza stone.

Transfer dough to pizza peel, bake dough. For thin crust, 5 minutes.

For thick crust, put sauce and toppings on raw dough and bake at 450°F for 10 minutes.

For think crust, for pan pizza: I would top my crust, leaving a rim, before baking. Bake for 15 minutes at 450°F.

Tomato Sauce:
½ c extra virgin oil
¼ c garlic, very thinly sliced
¼ c parsley
3 cans crushed Italian tomatoes
½ c Italian tomato sauce
2 tsp sun-dried herbs
2 tsp salt
½ tsp pepper
Hot chili oil
Slightly sauté garlic.

Add parsley, tomatoes (crushed and sauce) and herbs.

Simmer over very low heat for 20 minutes.

Season to taste.

I would add a very small pinch of sugar to balance the tartness of the tomatoes, not to sweeten the sauce.

Assembly
Crust:
Brush with 1 tbsp olive oil.

Brush with tomato sauce. For thick and pan pizza, leave 1 inch around the edges, uncoated by sauce.

Top with cheese and toppings of choice.

Add freshly cracked pepper and drizzle lightly with olive oil before baking.

Topping combinations:

Mixed meat—Pepperoni and mozzarella cheese (fresh or pan-fried) to hotel pizzeria (Italian sausage, pepperoni, Italian salami, crumbled fresh Italian sausage; fresh tomatoes and onions, sliced thinly; fresh basil leaves, pepper flakes, if you wish. Finish with grated or shaved parmesan cheese.

Four cheeses and mixed herbs—grated or crumbled fresh mozzarella, gruyere, caramelized, sliced fresh or grated; fresh basil, oregano and parsley, chopped; parmesan cheese to finish

Pepperoni—Mozzarella or a combination of mozzarella, marinated and provolone—sliced thinly or grated; pepperoni

Garlic and anchovy—fresh or preserved mozzarella—sliced thinly or grated; fresh garlic, thinly sliced; anchovy fillets, chopped; basil, optional

Seafood—Fresh or canned la—sliced thinly or grated; poached shrimp, squid, clams, anchovy fillets, chopped, optional; pepper flakes

E-mail the author or inquire @inquirer.com.ph

Learn to cook

SAN MIGUEL PURE FOODS Culinary Center brings the Art of Oriental Cuisine through a cooking demonstration by chef Rony Chong of The Good Earth Oriental Cuisine and Bar on July 27, 1:30-4:30 p.m., at the San Miguel Pure Foods Culinary Center, Legaspi corner Gallaz Sts., Bo. Ugong, Pasig (tel. 6220888, 6718876).

The Reggie Aspiras School of Culinary Arts offers: July 27—Brie Age Cuisine from the World Over; July 28—Modern Pinoy Buffet; July 30—Homemade Flavored Pasta (all levels); Aug. 1—Over 52 Easy and Delicious Recipes Recipes.

For complete schedule, call 9209296, 9278888 or 6035164.

Comfort candies. . .

From page 1

Sarol Publishing, 2003), he wrote that his lola's pastillas are "unparalleled, for I have never tasted anything that can even come close to their delightful creaminess.

Ed Quimson's Pastillas de Leche

1 liter pure carabao's milk
2 liters carabao's cream
2½ c sugar
1 dalag, (an only the thinly cut meat that gives the mixture a wonderful extra aroma)

Pour the milk and cream into a big pot or kawali. Mix in the sugar and stir to melt sugar. Place the dalag.

Turn on the stove. Use low fire so the liquid just simmers. Stir frequently with a wooden spoon. Stir in one direction only. Make sure that nothing solid settles at the bottom and that the milk doesn't curdle. The cooking may take some 3 hours. The pastillas is cooked if its consistency is like mapa (dense but it's still white).

Transfer the cooked pastillas to a bowl. Remove the dalag and. Cover with a plastic wrap per and seal. The wrapper will prevent skin forming on the surface. The mixture thickens when cooled.

Carabao cream and milk may be ordered from Pia Lim Castillo. Call 7295415 or e-mail tuyaboxfood@gmail.com.

E-mail the author or group foodrh@yahoo.com

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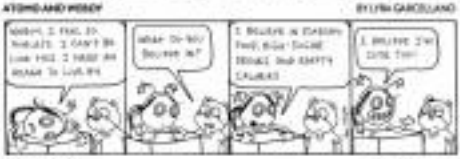

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1 Result of "The Greats"
5 Sharpen
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20 Flesh: Comb. form
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44 Dr. Seuss's Sneetches
46 Hamlet
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48 Wanderer
51 Subway
52 Cut off the end
53 Explosions
56 Drink
57 ___ sandiwara ganti
58 Pronto
59 Sound of disapproval
60 Interesting device
61 Hairs out
62 Tantalizes
63 Bottom of ch.

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1 Observing
2 Chief minister
3 Piano
4 Pointing
specialists
5 Bleak
6 Master sweeper
7 Seething

By Alex P. Shortkroog
Huntington Beach, CA

8 Tenuis materials: Comb.
9 Longitudinal wire reinforcement
10 Tool with teeth
11 Make
12 Unsavory
13 Refrigerator compartment
14 Iota
17 Handy unit
21 Beyond denial
23 Banners or pennants
24 Matter a mistake
26 Have remaining
29 Cooperative
30 Emulate Cassini
31 Sounds
33 Bluish-red
35 Church post
36 Second-in-command
38 Shrinking volume ratio
39 Celebrity passengers
40 Total handling with skate
43 Cake from Zagreb
45 Wild horse we're
46 Italian representative
49 Ornithologist
50 Chumucken
ancestors
51 Hubbub
53 Cyber-
54 Wild Bill
55 Former draft org.

Wednesday's Puzzle Solved

HOROSCOPE

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20): You're intelligent, theatrical and quick to see the big picture. Because of your shrewd observations and your dramatic flair, you can share a great influence on others. You occasionally experience leadership difficulties, however, because you're not always willing to do the work required to lead others. You're always mentally involved. Good news: The year ahead is wonderfully creative and romantically charged.

ARIES (March 21 to April 19): You're a good friend, but you're not always the most tactful person. Sometimes, you're so busy dealing with the trials, issues and problems of your friends that you neglect your own needs. Or you're so busy dealing with their emotions or soothing hurt feelings that you don't express your own opinions. You're telling a long-range plan this week.

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20): Someone older or more experienced than you has been good advice for you today. It certainly doesn't hurt to listen, even if you don't take it. You're a sensitive and perceptive Gemini at this time.

CANCER (June 21 to July 22): You can get a lot done at work today. Whatever you do, you will be very mentally productive. If you don't have a lot to make decisions. You work efficiently, so you like to be useful for a long time.

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22): This is the day to [illegible] Bring your thoughts about and to discuss the practicalities of how to care for someone in need.

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22): You might be able to rehabilitate some wounded relationships today. Be willing to listen to others' points of view. Some of what you hear may be painful to swallow, but it's worth the results.

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22): Disagreements with others are always unpleasant, but they're inevitable today. People are talking a lot. Stay away from any of the gossip. Don't be the source of someone else's more dramatic stories.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21): You're willing to work hard for your money, but you're not willing to work for nothing. If you're spending your money, you will buy things that you don't need. Be careful. You don't feel like being bullied.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21): You're in a wonderful day for socializing. You're very charming and understanding. If you're not careful, you'll spend more money than you can afford. Be careful with your money today.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19): You're in an excellent day for socializing. You won't have to work hard to make friends. You'll easily find someone or new solutions for old problems.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18): An older friend or someone more experienced than you might have some very good advice for you. Listen to what he or she has to say.

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20): Women, especially older women, or figures are interested with your emotional suggestions. You're clever and charismatic today.

CONCEPTIS SU DOKU

Conceptis Sudoku by Dave Green

		8				7		
				6				
9			1		3			5
		2		5		8		
	5		4		2		9	
		6		7		1		
8			5		7			3
				9				
		1				4		

Difficulty Level ★★★

HOW TO PLAY SU DOKU

Fill the grid so that every column, every row and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 to 9.
Tips and programs at www.sudoku.com

Answer to previous puzzle

1	7	4	3	6	2	9	5	8
3	5	2	9	8	7	4	6	1
6	8	9	5	1	4	2	7	3
4	1	8	6	7	3	5	8	2
2	6	7	1	9	5	3	8	4
9	3	5	2	4	8	6	1	7
5	4	1	7	3	9	8	2	6
8	2	6	4	5	1	7	3	9
7	9	3	8	2	6	1	4	5

ADD Bagoong beans and parboy. Simmer for a few more minutes. Add fish sauce.

USING a strong, carefully remove the beef shanks and arrange on the center of a soup bowl.

SCOOP the vegetables out and arrange around the bowls. Pour in hot broth and serve as soon. Serve with steamed rice and fish sauce and calamansi on the side.

LOWER the heat, cover and simmer for a few hours or until the beef is fork-tender. Add potatoes, banana and corn. Simmer for 5-8 minutes.

BOIL water in a stock pot or large casserole over high heat and put onions, ginger and peppercorn. Add the beef shanks and bring to a boil for one hour and 30 minutes, removing scum as it rises. Season with salt.

'Souping' up for the rainy days ahead

By Tessie Virgin-Bagsic-Reyes
Photos by Rudel Reniel

WITH THE RAINY SEASON officially here, it is time to start thinking of good, warm and filling soups.

Sinigang dar hili probably is definitely a crowd-favorite Filipino favorite.

Though the soup may seem simple, if temporary soups in your cheaper tried, it is so rich and deeply flavored that it often proves too much like and definitely worth trying to your own kitchen.

Bulalo soup consists of boiled marrow-rich beef bones with various vegetables. Meat and vegetables are added to further enrich the soup.

It is served piping hot and the marrow is sapped out of the large bones.

How the bulalo will turn out after boiling depends on several factors like the texture and consistency of the beef, the size and quality of the bone, and how long it is boiled to water with salt and whole peppercorns.

The beef is cooked to the bone for several hours until the meat becomes soft and tender and the broth becomes golden and extremely flavored.

If you claim it a "soup for beginners," basic to would be it: it is simple, but easy to do but packed with flavor.

Though it may be embarrassingly easy to make, it will likely be one of the best-tasting soups to ever cross your lips.

It's not only easy to cook but this hearty broth can certainly become a family favorite, assured Chef Edwin Santos, Sudeo Hotel Manila executive chef.

Some cuts readily available vegetables like native pechay and Baguio beans to add to the beef shank. You can add cabbage or Chinese pechay if you wish, saging na saba and potatoes are also common ingredients of nilaga, which bulalo basically is.

The vegetables go into the soup in different stages to allow for their varying cooking times.

That simmering hot bulalo is also being served at Teodoro Hotel's newly renovated coffee shop, Lutong Bahay (tel. 5227501).

STEP BY STEP

Ingredients

350 g beef shanks
20 grams pechay
250 banana saba
50 g Baguio beans
50 g sweet corn
150 g potato
1 g onion
2 tbsp fish sauce
2 grains black peppercorn
5 g ginger
2 tbsp salt or to taste

For suggestions, e-mail the author at vbs.pd@inquirer.com.ph

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COOKED pastillas is cooled.

WRAPPING pastillas in paper

CUT pastillas are ready to be wrapped.

It is fresh carabao's milk that makes very good pastillas

COUNTRY COOKING
Micky Ferre

Comfort candies: sweet memories

CHILDHOOD CANDIES ARE still remembered for many are to keeps around.

At the sari-sari store near my elementary school, we used to buy matamis candy, brightly colored bag round hard pieces covered in sugar and costing a centavo each. The red tasted like cherry, the green like Hide cough drops and the yellow like brown bulb.

Another sari-sari store sold Dio-Mix, sugar by products that were watch breakers. The yellowish brown cubes were shaped like long sticks, quite unlike those one can buy nowadays in Iloilo that are short and sizzling thin. We never knew how we had any of that pure was pliable then stretch it to breaking point.

My sisters and I still recount the loop of Bottlebi, pill-shaped brownish candies that tasted like chocolate and malt. My cousins loved how this was rationed to us from a big bottle, a little at a time. But we noticed one small bottle of our own when ours ran out. The candy disappeared from the market for a while. When it returned it wasn't the same. The observation isn't only my own for those of so many of my generation who value the same sentiments. Every time we recall our comfort candies.

Cow pastillas

In Cartagena town, Leyte, the pastillas de leche or milk candies aren't from cow milk as they are found in Bohol. My mother used to buy pastillas outside the church after Mass. Several small thin pieces were bound together by a piece of paper with the name Cow Brand on it. I once had a dreaming of a cow's head.

I still never buy that brand again. Last time I did, the pastillas were no longer top quality, tasting like chalk instead of milk.

It is fresh carabao's milk that makes very good pastillas. The high fat content ensures the creamy smooth quality.

Many pastillas and kesong puti makers have told me how difficult it is to have a steady supply of the milk. That is understandable. I still remember the carabao grazing in the land around my lola's home in Quezon City. She had a steady supply of fresh carabao's milk each morning.

Carabaos roamed the streets then and the ruler guided their droppings to be used as fertilizer for my lola's many plants. Now the pasture lands are gone and so are the carabaos. In the last 20 years of her life, lola did not get her daily dose of milk.

In Carigara, Leyte, the pastillas making told me she got her supply of carabao's milk from the town of Barugo. A check with people who know pointed me to the Leyte State University there.

It used to be called VISCA or the Visayas State College of Agriculture. I am glad the school is helping provide a steady supply of milk so cooks can keep on doing their specialties.

We passed by Carmen's on a Sunday but no one was working so we could not buy any pastillas. Fortunately, we got some made by Sonny's.

Ringside view

The trip, however, was not wasted as I was able to capture the process, from the cooking to the wrapping, at Luming's.

I still think the old Cow Brand was so much better because it wasn't too sweet and the texture was finer.

In Bohol, I had the chance to see pastillas being cooked in a Maloloy house. The white milk with the sugar is always cooked till it reaches the "soft ball" stage. The town's premier cultural historian, said Maloloy felt considered white pastillas uncooked.

There was a mound of homemade pastillas on the table and each of us was given a sampling to have a taste of that goodness. It seemed so sinful but we did as directed. There's nothing like just cooked pastillas.

While the Maloloy pastillas are still rolled into small bits and wrapped in white paper, a similar product down south, particularly in Bacolod and Iloilo, remains as a whole round.

My first encounter with dulce pena was a small powdered milk candy given to me. When I opened it, I thought I had gone to heaven. You cannot possibly finish one whole can because the dulce pena is so rich.

I was told that the women in the farm did the cooking and they had no other customers. Today as the pastillas market is finite, their price is pinned in plastic containers and kept in the refrigerator because of their short shelf life.

The demand is higher than the supply so, very often, there is no dulce pena to bring home.

While it is not exactly dulce pena or dulce leche, as it is known in Spanish, I do remember, but then condensed milk, cooked for several hours in an can half submerged in water, comes out a similar brown substance.

I thought my dreams and I discovered the process but everyone I talked to had the same childhood memory. And they were not only Filipinos.

A British conversation on an agreement here resulted dinner for me and some friends. We discovered how fine, banana and toffee pie. He thought we would be surprised by his recipe. "For the toffee," he began, then we all chimed in, "boil a can of condensed..."

The following recipe is from chef Ed Quimson's grandmother. In his essay "Recipes from My Lola's Kitchen" (Tales and...

CONTINUED ON

ENTERTAINMENT

Editor Ernesto C. Velarde

Mail feedback: Inquirer.net natin@gmail.com; fax 896-2214; and 896-2220; e-mail us at entertainment@inquirer.com.ph Website: www.inquirer.net/entertainment

Rockers to open Cinemanila

SAM GABARRI'S "Irma Paloy" and Arnon Corbijn's "Control" are set to open the 9th Cinemanila International Film Festival (CIFF) on Aug. 8 at the Gateway Mall Cineplex 10 in Cubao, Quezon City.

"Irma Paloy" stars former folk-rock singer Marianne Northill as Hippie, who resorts to unusual means to pay for her university ill grandson's medication. The film was showcased in this year's Berlin International Film Fest.

Int'l competition

"Control," photographer and music video director Corbijn's first film feature which premiered recently at the Cannes Film Festival, covers the life and death of Ian Curtis, lead singer of the legendary post-punk rock band, Joy Division.

The new films are among 16 entries in CIFF's International Competition. The others are: "Future Child" (Brilliana Mendoza); "4 Months, 3 Weeks & 2 Days" (Cristian Mungiu); "Katsa" (Directors Attached); "The Edge of Heaven" (Fatih Akin); "Love and Honor" (Yoji Yamada); "Namesake" (Mira Nair); "On our Way Home" (Hirozaki Inoguchi); "Persepolis" (Marjane Satrapi and Vincent Paronnaud); "Port of the Winds" (Mohammad Ahmadi); "Redmond's Life of My Own" (Ann Hui); "Sanshara" (Prasanna Jayakody); and "Shortgut Bangkok" (Jit Phokaew).

Asean category

The Asean Competition category includes "Rabbitbrain Bra" (Hen de Guzman, Philippines); "Love Conquers All" (Tan Chui Mui, Malaysia); "Love for Share" (Nia Di Nata, Indonesia); "Wishful" (Nanzia Ahmad, Malaysia); "Pao's Story" (Quang Kim Ngoc, "Alex" (Mr. Nithiwat Bakkamanang, Thailand); "Syndromes and a Century" (Apichatpong Weerasethakul, Thailand); "Things We Do When We Fall in Love" (James Lee, Malaysia); "Three Days to Forever" (Riri Riza, Indonesia); "The Straw Shelter" (Wan Intrambong, Thailand); and "Village People Radio Show" (Amir Muhammad, Malaysia).

Pinoy classics

In the Non-Competition category, nine acclaimed Filipino films in 35mm and digital format will be screened: "Magnifico" (Rivera J. de los Reyes, Best Feature Film, 2004 Berlin International Film Festival); "Batang West Side" (Lee Dion, Best Student Feature Film, 2002 Singapore International Film Festival); "Starting Third World" (Dilan de Leon, Best Film, 2001 Young Critics Circle festival); "Kubrador" (Jeffrey Jeturian, Winner, FIPRESCI prize, 2006 Moscow International Film Festival); "Ang Ilaw Pamagong Kalimagong" (Mes de Guzman, Best Director Award, 2006 Asia-Pacific International Film Festival); and "Ang Pagdadalaga ni Maximo Oliveros" (Auraeus Solito, Best Feature Film, 2006 Berlin International Film Festival).

Cinemanila is also holding script- and career-writing contests. Those within these two writing tracks: The grand prize winner will receive P300,000, and two second-prize winners, P150,000 each.

First prize winner for the essay writing contest is P75,000, second prize, P50,000. Grand prize, P30,000.

Deadline for submission of entries is Aug. 31 for scripts and Aug. 15 for essays. For rules and regulations, log on to the CIFF website http://www.cinemanila.org.ph or e-mail cinemanila@gmail.com.

Boracay run

The 9th CIFF runs from Aug. 8 to 19 at the Gateway Mall, and from Aug. 17 to 19 in Boracay.

The festival is organized jointly by the Independent Cinema Association of the Philippines (Incp), the Film Development Council of the Philippines (FDCP) and the National Commission for Culture and the Arts (NCCA).

HARAWAN! Fukkirol and Miki Hosojiochi in "Irma Paloy"

Cheer Factor

Life as magic

LONDON—Daniel Radcliffe gained access to a reported 20 million pounds ($40 million) fortune on Monday, when he turned 18. He says he has no plans to waste his cash on cars, drink and parties. —Reuters

Did You Know...

'Idol' makes peace with label boss

LOS ANGELES—After months of feuding with her label boss, pop singer and "American Idol" alumnus Kelly Clarkson on Monday called music mogul Clive Davis one of the "great record execs of all time" and apologized.

The high-profile dispute with Davis, chairman and chief executive of BMG Label Group, has never shadowed the release earlier of Clarkson's latest album "My December."

"Clive ... has been an important force in my success," the Grammy winner said on her website.

Turmoil continued prior to the release of "My December" when Clarkson pulled the plug on a summer concert tour because of poor ticket sales. —Reuters

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METRO MANILA

MEGAMALL
(BLIND DATING)
VACANCY
HARRY POTTER 5
THE SIMPSONS
RATATOUILLE
TRANSFORMERS
(ON THE LAND OF WOMEN)
PLANET TERROR
(DIE HARD 4
LOUSIA
WHITE NOISE
(TEHRAN)

GREENBELT
TRANSFORMERS
RATATOUILLE
BATMAN

GREENHILLS
(BLIND DATING)
(TEHRAN)
WHITE NOISE
HARRY POTTER 5
DIE HARD 4
THE SIMPSONS
RATATOUILLE
LOUSIA
(TRANSFORMERS)
VACANCY
(PLANET TERROR
(ON THE LAND OF WOMEN)

MARQUEE
RATATOUILLE
(BLIND DATING)
HARRY POTTER 5
TRANSFORMERS
RATATOUILLE
THE SIMPSONS
LOUSIA
(PLANET TERROR
(DIE HARD 4
(ON THE LAND OF WOMEN)
(BLIND DATING)
VACANCY

MEGAMALL
HARRY POTTER 5
TRANSFORMERS
RATATOUILLE
THE SIMPSONS
LOUSIA
PLANET TERROR
(DIE HARD 4
(ON THE LAND OF WOMEN)
(BLIND DATING)
VACANCY

GREENBELT
HARRY POTTER 5
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RATATOUILLE
THE SIMPSONS
DIE HARD 4
LOUSIA

GREENHILLS
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MARQUEE
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HARRY POTTER 5
LOUSIA
RATATOUILLE
THE SIMPSONS
HARRY POTTER 5
LOUSIA
THE SIMPSONS

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Watch the great American wrestling action once again on Sportstime!

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Admission Prices:
P 120 (Metro Manila) • P 110 (Cebu, Clark, Pampanga) • P 90 (Davao)
With P 20 OFF for students (photo proof required)

(BLIND DATING)
(WHITE NOISE
PENTAGON
(THE SIMPSONS)
HARRY POTTER 5
RATATOUILLE
(TRANSFORMERS)
(DIE HARD 4

HARRY POTTER 5
(TRANSFORMERS)
DIE HARD 4
RATATOUILLE
THE SIMPSONS
LOUSIA

RATATOUILLE
HARRY POTTER 5
LOUSIA
(TRANSFORMERS)

LOUSIA
RATATOUILLE
THE SIMPSONS
HARRY POTTER 5
RATATOUILLE
THE SIMPSONS

HARRY POTTER 5
DIE HARD 4
LOUSIA
(WONDERTOWN)
(THE SIMPSONS)
RATATOUILLE

RATATOUILLE
LOUSIA
THE SIMPSONS
HARRY POTTER 5

(TRANSFORMERS)
HARRY POTTER 5
RATATOUILLE
THE SIMPSONS
(VACANCY
(NEXT
LOUSIA
DIE HARD 4

HARRY POTTER 5
RATATOUILLE
THE SIMPSONS
LOUSIA

New reality challenge puts celebrit

LAST SUNDAY TUESDAY AND Wednesday at 11 p.m., we stayed up late to watch the new "reality game" TV show, "Kung Ako Kaya?" The GMA 7 program invites celebrities to different demanding tasks that would normally be very beyond their ability or strength to accomplish.

Hosted by Jose Manalo and Wowowee dancers, the first episode's task was for Rustom Padilla, Mel Martinez and Ariel Lopez to work as carpenters. Last Monday they carried many sacks of vegetables at a public market—and the following day they literally built brand new apartment units in different areas of Manila. Needless to say, the celebrity contestants chosen were understandably ...

Despite the...

Evidently, we gotta be living...

Anyhow, I'm gonna be looking forward to the next episode of "Kung Ako Kaya?" Maybe I'll be able to learn a thing or two about how to be more patient with my fellow motorists on the road. Or maybe I'll learn how to be more patient with my fellow motorists on the road. Or maybe I'll learn how to be more patient with my fellow motorists on the road. Or maybe I'll learn

y contestants through the wringer

Are dark spots worrying you?
Underarms, Nape, Groin & Freckles
Advance Miracle Whitening Cream
Fast, Safe & Effective
The Solution for Oily Skin, Open Pores, & Pimple Marks!
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KISSABLE LIPS FOR MEN
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ONLY CINEPLEX IN THE COUNTRY
EXPERIENCE THE DIFFERENCE
THE SIMPSONS
BLIND DATING
RATATOUILLE
ENCANTO
OUIJA BOARD
HARRY POTTER 5
TRANSFORMERS
DIE HARD 4
THE SIMPSONS MOVIE
RATATOUILLE
Mall 5
1 OUIJA BOARD
2 THE SIMPSONS
3 RATATOUILLE
4 PLANET TERROR
5 HARRY POTTER 5
ARANETA COLISEUM
ENGELBERT HUMPERDINCK
LIVE! AUGUST 10 SUN / 7PM • BUY YOUR TICKETS NOW!

AT THE CINEMAS

GLORIETTA 1	1	2	3	4		
GLORIETTA 4	1 RATATOUILLE	2 BLIND DATING	3 THE SIMPSONS			
GREENBELT 1	4	5	6	7		
GREENBELT 2	1 TRANSFORMERS	2 THE SIMPSONS				
GREENBELT 3	1 THE SIMPSONS	2 HARRY POTTER & THE ORDER OF THE PHOENIX				
ALABANG TOWN CENTER	1 THE SIMPSONS	2 BLIND DATING	3 RATATOUILLE			
AYALA CENTER CEBU	1 THE SIMPSONS	2 HARRY POTTER & THE ORDER OF THE PHOENIX	3 RATATOUILLE	4 OUIJA		
MARKET! MARKET!	1 OUIJA	2 THE SIMPSONS	3 RATATOUILLE	4 DIE HARD 4.0	5 HARRY POTTER & THE ORDER OF THE PHOENIX	
TRINOMA	1 OUIJA	2 DIE HARD 4.0	3 HARRY POTTER & THE ORDER OF THE PHOENIX	4 THE SIMPSONS		
	5 BLIND DATING	6 RATATOUILLE	7 THE SIMPSONS			

AT THE MALLS

Ayala Malls

- Glorietta — Mechanical Magic — July 27 to 29, 2007 at the Activity Center
- Greenbelt — Shop & Stand at Greenbelt 1 Promo — Get a chance to win a shopping prize valued at P1M! Walk to Boracay for two! P300 worth of purchase of any Greenbelt 1 establishment tried — July 1 to September 30, 2007
- Alabang Town Center — Chow Mein Animation Activities — July 23 & 24, 2007 at the Activity Center
- Ayala Center Cebu — Cebu Visions Exhibit — July 27 to 29, 2007 at Paseo
- Market! Market! — Metro Fashion Week — July 13 to 31, 2007 at parking building Metro Department
- Circulo — Rosenberg Philippines presents Disney's CINDERELLA Kids — at ADR's Circle Theater - Opens August 11, 2007 — For inquiries, pls. call 887-0710
- Ayala Museum — EMERGENCE - a solo exhibition of metal sculptures by Rainer Ganchero — July 28 to August 5, 2007 — For more info, call 729-7141 loc 213/214 or email museum_inquiries@ayalamuseum.org
- Tri-Noma — Magic 98.5's Amped on the Ramp — July 27, 2007 at the Activity Center — Mechanical Magic — August 3 to 5, 2007 at the Activity Center

Rockefeller Fullerton the City of Makati
in cooperation with
Directed by Bobi Rodriguez and Ian Viñas
August 11 - December 13, 2007
Circulo, 2nd Flr., Greenbelt 1, Paseo de Roxas, Makati City
For inquiries call: 887-0710 or 891-9999

RINGO ENTERTAINMENT PRESENTS
MECHANICAL ACTION
A theatrical circus performance of man-powered machines and acrobatic acts.
Glorietta Activity Center July 27-29
Greenbelt Activity Center August 2-3
Alabang Town Center August 10-12
Ayala Center Cebu August 17-19
Trinoma August 24-26
Market! Market! August 31-Sept 2

ROBINSONS MOVIEWORLD CINEMAS MOVIE GUIDE

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MOVIEHOUSE SCHEDULES/PRICES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE

GALLERIA

1 HARRY POTTER 6 + THX
2 OUIJA
3 BLIND DATING
4 RATATOUILLE
5 THE SIMPSONS
6 DIE HARD 4
7 TRANSFORMERS
8 IndieBlue: HANGGANG DITO na LAMANG AT MARAMING SALAMAT PO
9 HARRY POTTER 5
10 VACANCY

R-18! APPROVED WITHOUT CUTS!

Felino Tañada's
HANGGANG DITO NA LAMANG at MARAMING SALAMAT PO

Rainiers Borromeo Cañete indieBlue — showing on July 23 to 8

ERMITA

1 OUIJA
2 TRANSFORMERS
3 THE SIMPSONS
4 RATATOUILLE
5 BLIND DATING
6 DIE HARD 4
7 HARRY POTTER 5

METRO EAST

1 TRANSFORMERS
2 HARRY POTTER 5
3 DIE HARD 4
4 RATATOUILLE
5 THE SIMPSONS
6 BLIND DATING
7 VACANCY
8 OUIJA

NOVALICHES

1 HARRY POTTER 5
2 TRANSFORMERS
3 OUIJA
4 THE SIMPSONS
5 RATATOUILLE
6 DIE HARD 4

PIONEER

1 HARRY POTTER 5
2 RATATOUILLE
3 THE SIMPSONS
4 OUIJA

STA. ROSA

1 THE SIMPSONS
2 RATATOUILLE
3 OUIJA
4 HARRY POTTER 5
5 CAPE KARMA

LIPA

1 HARRY POTTER 5
2 RATATOUILLE
3 OUIJA
4 VACANCY
5 CAPE KARMA

DASMARIÑAS

1 HARRY POTTER 5
2 RATATOUILLE
3 THE SIMPSONS
4 OUIJA
5 CAPE KARMA

IMUS

1 HARRY POTTER 5
2 THE SIMPSONS
3 RATATOUILLE
4 OUIJA
5 WHITE NOISE 2
6 PLANET TERROR

ANGELES

1 HARRY POTTER 5
2 RATATOUILLE
3 THE SIMPSONS
4 OUIJA

TARLAC

1 OUIJA
2 HARRY POTTER 5
3 VACANCY

STARMILLS

1 HARRY POTTER 5
2 RATATOUILLE
3 THE SIMPSONS
4 OUIJA
5 TRANSFORMERS
6 DIE HARD 4

BACOLOD

1 HARRY POTTER 5
2 OUIJA
3 RATATOUILLE
4 THE SIMPSONS
5 RESERVE
6 PAN'S LABYRINTH

ILOILO

1 HARRY POTTER 5
2 RATATOUILLE
3 OUIJA
4 THE SIMPSONS
5 ZODIAC
6 DIE HARD 4

MMTA

METRO MANILA THEATERS ASSOCIATION

MOVIE GUIDE

NOW SHOWING